

## **F037: Developments in Modern Photography**

Thursdays 7:15 - 10pm

Rm 124

Cindy Bernard, Instructor

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### **Course Summary:**

Through looking at the work of artists and photographers, we examine issues in photographic production in the 20th century. What is the relationship between photographic representation and the physical world? Is there photographic truth? Do photographs constitute "a universal language?" Is photographic meaning contingent on information exterior to the frame? How do museums, archives and other institutions influence our reading of photographs?

### **Course Format:**

Weekly slide presentations, lectures, discussion and related reading assignments.

### **Requirements:**

1. Attendance of class sessions
2. Active participation in discussions
3. Successful completion of assignments

### **Grading:**

Reading Assignments 15%

Midterm paper 25%

Class Participation and Attendance 30%

Final paper 30%

**A** = exceptional engagement in written assignments as well as original, well considered participation in class discussions

**B** = thoughtful completion of assignments and active participation in class discussions

**C** = adequate completion of assignments and average participation in discussions

**D** = lack of thought and effort evident in discussions and assignments, poor work

**F** = total loss

**Late assignments:** automatic drop of one grade level on assignment.

an assignment is late if not turned in at the beginning of class on due date (unless otherwise specified).

### **Attendance**

You are expected to attend every class session

3 unexcused absences = F

3 "tardys" = 1 absence

### **Assignments:**

#### **Readings:**

One page summary/response on handouts only - due the following class.

**Midterm paper: (Due February 22nd):** 3-5 pages on a favorite photographer/artist discussing at least one work in depth, attach bibliography with at least 3 references, and xeroxed examples of work.

**Final paper: (1st draft due March 15th, Final draft due April 5th)**

Curate a 3-5 person photography exhibition: Include a curator's statement (2 pages), brief summaries of the work of each artist (1 page each), bibliography, xeroxed examples of work and potential installation diagram (I'll provide a floor plan).

**All written assignments are to be typed, double spaced, approximately 250 words per page (10 or 12 pt. type). Plagiarism is grounds for an automatic "F".**

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**Class Schedule** (subject to change, additional readings to be assigned)

### Week 1: January 18

Introductions

Begin reading textbook: "Criticizing Photographs"

Complete two chapters per week.

### Week 2: January 25

Historical Overview 1

### Week 3: February 1

Historical Overview 2

Reading: "Judgment Seat of Photography"

### Week 4: February 8

Photo-conceptualism

### Week 5: February 15

Pictures and appropriation

Reading: "Pictures"

### Week 6: February 22

Guest speaker: Carol Ann Klonarides, Curator

Mid-terms due at start of class.

### Week 7: March 1

Staged images: Gregory Crewdson, Sharon Lockhart, Jeff Wall

Reading: TBA

### Week 8: March 8

"New Objectivity" and contemporary German photography (Gursky, Ruff)

Reading: TBA

### Week 9: March 15

Guest speaker: Freddie Sharmini, Artist

(Intersections between fashion and art photography)

First drafts of final due start of class

### Week 10: March 22

Meetings on first drafts

### Week 11:

Films: Harun Farocki

### Week 12:

Final papers due start of class - Party!

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### **Midterm paper: Due June 28 at the start of class. (NOTE DUE DATE HAS BEEN MOVED!)**

Write 3-5 pages (750-1000 words, typed, double spaced) on a favorite 20th century photographer or artist using photographs.

Your paper may focus on a single body of work or give an overview of a person's art practice.

Discuss at least one work or body of work in depth using the methods discussed in your textbook (pages 103-115 will be particularly helpful)

Focus on the artwork - not on biography.

Use your book as a tool!

Attachments:

1. Xeroxed work examples.
2. Bibliography citing at least 3 sources.
3. Use footnotes as necessary.

Some questions worth considering (in no particular order):

1. What is the relationship of the work to the social/political climate of its time?
2. What is the relationship of the work to other work from the period?
3. What issues (political, social, aesthetic) are addressed (or not) by the work?
4. What is the artist's position on their own work?
5. What is your position on the artist's work?

Consider writing about someone new and avoiding the old standards I know you are all **bored** with! (Frank, Evans, Arbus, Winogrand, Friedlander, Stieglitz, Steichan, Eggleston, Michaels etc.)

**Some new possibilities:** Nobuyoshi Araki, Sophie Calle, Gabriel Orozco, Cindy Sherman, Barbara Kruger, Allan Sekula, John Baldessari, Richard Prince, James Welling, Sherrie Levine, Sharon Lockhart, Jeff Wall, Andy Warhol, Wolfgang Tillmans, Andreas Gursky, Thomas Ruff, Thomas Struth, Candida Hoffer, Martha Rosler, David Levinthal, Krzysztof Wodiczko, Mary Kelly, John Heartfield, Ed Ruscha, Laurie Simmons, Robert Mapplethorpe, Jo Ann Callis, John Divola, John Coplans, Nan Goldin, Sarah Charlesworth, Dennis Adams, Nancy Burson, James Casebere, Lorna Simpson, Tina Barney, Bernd and Hilla Becher, William Wegman, William Christenberry, Jeanne Dunning, Larry Johnson, Louise Lawler, Robbert Flick, Andres Serrano, Joel-Peter Witkin, Man Ray, Bruce Nauman, Carrie Mae Weems, Gregory Crewdson, Louise Lawler, Victor Burgin, Jan Groover, Jan Dibbets, Christian Boltanski, Lewis Baltz, Joe Deal, John Divola, Eileen Cowin, Uta Barth.....

Relevant Grading criteria:

**A** = exceptional engagement in written assignments

**B** = thoughtful completion of assignments

**C** = adequate completion of assignments

**D** = lack of thought and effort evident in assignments, poor work

**F** = total loss

Missing minimum elements resulting in a drop of 1/2 grade each:

Lack of bibliography

Lack of illustrations

Insufficient length

Failure to discuss a work at length

**All written assignments are to be typed, double spaced, approximately 250 words per page (10 or 12 pt. type). Handwritten papers will not be accepted.**

**Plagiarism is grounds for an automatic "F".**

**Late papers incur an automatic drop of one grade level on the paper.**

**Papers will not be accepted after July 5th. .**

And Yes! The person you choose for this assignment may also be one of the artists in your final assignment.

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### **Final paper: Due April 5th (beginning of class)**

Curate a 3-5 person photography exhibition.

Papers should include:

1. List of artists
2. Curators statement (2 pages)
3. Artist summaries (1 page per artist)
4. Xeroxed work examples.
5. Bibliography citing at least 3 sources.
6. Footnotes as necessary.
7. Installation diagram (I'll bring in xeroxed floorplans next week).

### **Draft: Due March 15th (beginning of class)**

List of artists, First draft of curator's statement.

### **Curator's Statement**

The curator's statement should cover the reasons for selecting the artists for your "exhibition." Why put these artists together in a show? Are they related by formal, social, aesthetic, or historic issues? How does your juxtaposition of artists/artworks cause us to consider the artwork in new and different ways? Or alternately, does your selection cause us to rethink a common theme?

Sample excerpts from curator's statements:

#### Not Just for Laughs (1982)

"Not Just for Laughs" came about because I began to see a lot of work that seemed unfashionable and unpretentious, and was about everything *but* art issues. The work didn't constitute a school or movement, wasn't polemical, and didn't lend itself to interpretation. First it made me laugh, then it made me think." - Marsha Tucker

#### Notorious: Alfred Hitchcock and Contemporary Art (1999)

"Despite the fact that such directors as Antonioni, Ford, Sirk and Fellini have influenced contemporary artists and been the subject of their work, it is Alfred Hitchcock whose shadow looms largest over contemporary artists, filmmakers and the public alike. To celebrate the centenary of his birth, MOMA is pleased to present this exhibition, *Notorious: Hitchcock and Contemporary Art*, which brings together a number of works dealing both directly and indirectly with the master of suspense." - Kerry Brougher

#### The Selling of Gender (from last term)

"Hollywood with its immense power has been responsible for generating stereotypes of gender for many years. The Hollywood created blockbuster has become the new preacher; the shared moment of experiencing a film at the multiplex, the new community gathering. As films shape out belief systems the gender roles and behavior they represent are taken in as holy scripture.

The artists I have chosen for this show all attack the selling of the stereotypical gender role, using the same language that created those roles." - Joaquin Lazo

#### Shows ideas to avoid:

Artists grouped together because of shared ethnicity or gender: "women photographers".

Works grouped together because of technique: "3 Color Photographers".

If you're stuck re-read (or read!) Chapter 7 in Criticizing Photographs - "Theory: Is It Art" - Any of the theoretical positions discussed on pages 148-166 will provide a good point of departure for an exhibition idea.

### **Artist Summaries**

Why did you select each artist? Summarize the main themes in their artwork and discuss at least one work in depth, relating that work to the concept for your show.

### **Here's that new possibilities list again:**

Nobuyoshi Araki, Sophie Calle, Gabriel Orozco, Cindy Sherman, Barbara Kruger, Allan Sekula, John Baldessari, Richard Prince, James Welling, Sherrie Levine, Sharon Lockhart, Jeff Wall, Andy Warhol, Wolfgang Tillmans, Andreas Gursky, Thomas Ruff, Thomas Struth, Candida Hoffer, Martha Rosler, David Levinthal, Krzysztof Wodiczko, Mary Kelly, John Heartfield, Ed Ruscha, Laurie Simmons, Robert Mapplethorpe, Jo Ann Callis, John Divola, John Coplans, Nan Goldin, Sarah Charlesworth, Dennis Adams, Nancy Burson, James Casebere, Lorna Simpson, Tina Barney, Bernd and Hilla Becher, William Wegman, William Christenberry, Jeanne Dunning, Larry Johnson, Louise Lawler, Robbert Flick, Andres Serrano, Joel-Peter Witkin, Man Ray, Bruce Nauman, Carrie Mae Weems, Gregory Crewdson, Louise Lawler, Victor Burgin, Jan Groover, Jan Dibbets, Christian Boltanski, Lewis Baltz, Joe Deal, John Divola, Eileen Cowin, Uta Barth.....

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### Missing minimum elements resulting in a drop of 1/2 grade each:

Lack of bibliography

Lack of illustrations

Insufficient length

Failure to discuss works at length

Missing artist summary (per artist)

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**PLEASE PROOFREAD!**