

Syllabus

Exploring Models of Social Practice: Detroit to Lima

Faculty: Addie Langford

Date: 2015

Program: Interdisciplinary Studies/ Fine Arts

Level: Junior

Hours: 6

Classes: 1 per week

Course Description

Social Practice (and all of the other terms used to describe it such as Socially Engaged Art, Dialogical Art, Participatory Art, Public Art, etc.) is a relatively recent form of art centered around the practice of collaborative work, community, and citizenship in the city or specified life-spaces of communal engagement and duration. Social Practice has grown in its acceptance in the past 15-20 years as artists, academics, and critics have become more acutely conscious of the need for new pedagogy and methodology in art schools and the artworld. This course explores Social Practice in terms of historical and contemporary models. *Exploring Models of Social Practice* will link history with recent modes of engaging community in contemporary Detroit in national and international contexts. *Exploring Models of Social Practice* will examine Social Practice as both an art form as well as a methodology and pedagogy bearing upon the relationship between process, interaction, objects and experiences. This approach will challenge the participants of the class (including the instructor) to keep channels open in order to embrace and leverage complexities of aesthetics and genre to generate their own models of significant engagement in contemporary practice.

Course Outcomes

At the conclusion of this course, students will be able to:

1. demonstrate a knowledge of the basic history of Social Practice models in the form of a classroom presentation;
2. utilize urban settings and experiences as springboard for research and project development;
3. articulate their concept and research with a written project statement (1500 words);
4. construct and execute group and independent projects within varied community environments;
5. document and present through photo-media and written forms all aspects of group and independent research;

6. deliver critical responses using the learned vocabulary of Social Practice forms;
7. exercise different modes of critique and response appropriate to exploring the social practice engagement.

Course and Evaluation Guidelines

For course guidelines, please see guideline detail passed out on first day of class, and in the online course folder.

Course Projects and Evaluation Percentages

(4 weeks) 15% City Response Project
(3 weeks) 15% Wall Messages; Mural Traditions
(2 weeks) 10% Place and the Performative Act
(4 weeks) 20% Self-Guided Project/ Research
10% Class presentation
(3 weeks) 15% The Feast, Service and the Event
10% 1500 word statement

Readings

Articles

Claire Bishop, "The Social Turn: Collaboration and its Discontents," *Artificial Hells: Participatory Art and the Politics of Spectatorship* (London: Verso, 2012), 11- 40.

Suzanne Lacy, "Toward a Critical Language for Public Art," in *Mapping the Terrain: New Genre Public Art*, ed. Suzanne Lacy (Seattle: Bay, 1995), 171- 185.

Grant H. Kester, "The Semantics of Collaboration," *The One and the Many: Contemporary Collaborative Art in a Global Context* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2011), 1- 8.

Grant H. Kester, "Galatea's Gaze: Ethics, Spectacle, and Participation," in *Engagement Party: Social Practice at MOCA, 2008-2012*, ed. Jane Hyun (Los Angeles: The Museum of Contemporary Art, 2013), 15-25.

Cuauhtemoc Medina, "Maximum Effort, Minimum Result," in *When Faith Moves Mountains*, ed. Francis Alys, Cuauhtemoc Medina (Madrid: Turner, 2005), 176-181.

Books

Francis Alys, Cuauhtemoc Medina, *When Faith Moves Mountains* (Madrid: Turner, 2005).

Charles Esche, Kerstin Niemann, and Stephanie Smith, ed. *Heartland* (Chicago: Smart Museum of Art and Eindhoven: Van Abbemuseum, 2009).

Luke Fischbeck, Lawrence Rinder, David Wilson, *The Possible* (Berkeley: University of California Press, Berkeley Art Museum and Pacific Film Archive, 2014).

Grant Kester and Erik Bluhm, *Engagement Party: Social Practice at MOCA, 2008-2012* (Los Angeles: The Museum of Contemporary Art, 2013), 15-25.

Stephanie Smith, ed. *Feast: Radical Hospitality in Contemporary Art* (Smart Museum of Art, University of Chicago Press, 2013).

Nato Thompson, ed. *Living As Form: Socially Engaged Art from 1991-2011* (New York: Creative Time and Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 2012).

Suggested Texts

Kirsi Peltomäki, *Situation Aesthetics: The Work of Michael Asher* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT, 2010).

SYLLABUS

WEEK 1	Project	<i>City Response Project (Baltimore, Detroit)</i>
	In Class	– Review syllabus/course guidelines
	Presentation-	Overview of social practice/anthropology; life as art, notion of dwelling; Rick Lowe, Project Rowe House; Mitch Cope and Gina Reichert, Power House Productions, Detroit
	Assignment	– Review Rick Lowe/Power House websites; Walk through your neighborhood and sketch two pages of things you notice that bring meaning to this place
	Reading:	Suzanne Lacy, “Toward a Critical Language for Public Art,” in <i>Mapping the Terrain: New Genre Public Art</i> (Seattle: Bay, 1995), 171 -185.
WEEK 2	Project	<i>City Response Project (Chicago- Detroit)</i>
	In Class	– Discuss Lacy’s, “Toward a Critical Language for Public Art,” 171- 185.
	Excursion	- Heidelberg Project and Dabl’s Bead Museum; begin group research
	Assignment	– Group project - What is it to / be / engage in the city? What is it to live in a place? In groups, explore neighborhood one or more miles away from CIA. Choose a site for to create an engaging situation (see project detail sheet)

WEEK 3 **Project** *City Response Project*

In Class – Further discussion of Lacy’s, “Debated Territory: Toward Critical language for Public Art.”

Discuss project ideas for group projects, continue in class work on or off-site.

Assignment – Create and document group engagement through 5-10 minute video due Week 4

WEEK 4 **Project** *City Response Project (Critique)*

In Class – View videos/ get into groups to critique/discuss videos of engagement situations

Assignment – Utilizing project guidelines passed out in class, write a 500 word review describing one of the group projects

WEEK 5 **Project** *Wall Messages; Mural Traditions (Philadelphia- Detroit)*

In Class Presentation- Mexican Muralists, Diego Rivera; Philadelphia mural project

Excursion- Detroit Institute of Art, Rivera Court

Assignment – Create pop-up (non-permanent) mural/propaganda on or off campus- Due week 6

Document with photos or video if class can’t walk to see; optional- encouraged (not required) to visit graffiti garage downtown, ‘Z’ Garage, Library Street, 27 mural artists

Reading: Linda Bank Downs, *Diego Rivera: The Detroit Industry Murals* (Detroit: DIA, 1999).

WEEK 6 **Project** *Wall Messages; Mural Traditions*

In Class - Critique pop-up murals in site and through photos/videos

Presentation- Performance and Judson Dance Theatre, Trisha Brown; out of the studio, into the streets; Read essay from Larry Render

Assignment – Research artist list offered in class

WEEK 7

Project *Place and the Performative Act*

In Class – Presentation- continue movement and the Event take art out of the studio, into the streets; performance and Judson Dance Theatre, Trisha Brown;

Assignment – In groups, explore a way of moving to highlight, spotlight, enhance or critique things that occur on the CCS campus or in a five block radius. Any dancers in class, please separate into groups without dancers

Reading – Francis Alys, Cuauhtemoc Medina, *When Faith Moves Mountains* (Madrid, Turner, 2005).

Consider collective movement, dance, why do people move and move in meaningful ways together? Look at traffic patterns as choreographic movement, sketch two pages

WEEK 8

Project *Place and the Performative Act*

In Class – Observe and critique performative responses

Assignment – read introduction, Stephanie Smith, *Feast: Radical Hospitality in Contemporary Art* (Chicago: Smart Museum of Art, University of Chicago Press, 2013).

Make one page of notes in your sketchbook

WEEK 9

Project *Self-Guided Project/ Research*

In Class - In class studio work and research; one-on-one conversations with instructor

Assignment - Continue work on self- guided project

Bring to Class - Share with conversation groups: five pages of notes, two books (one historical, one contemporary) on your chosen topic of research. Discuss reflections, discoveries, and project ideas

WEEK 10

Project *Self-Guided Project/ Research*

In Class - In class studio work and research; one-on-one conversations with instructor

Assignment - Continue work on self- guided project, due in weeks 14 and 15 depending on group assignment

WEEK 11

Project *Self-Guided Project/ Research*

In Class - Final critiques (Group 1 students 1-12)

Assignment – Continue work on self- guided project, due in weeks 14 and 15 depending on group assignment

Begin 1500 word statement

WEEK 12 **Project** *Self-Guided Project/ Research*

In Class - Final critiques (Group 2 students 13-28)

Assignment – Prepare documentation of semester images and writing portfolios due week 15, continue work on self- guided project

Due week 13: Draft of 1500 word statement

WEEK 13 **Group Project** *The Feast, Service, and the Event*

In Class – Presentation: Detroit Soup; Review Detroit Soup and Capuchin Monk websites

Assignment/Excursion – Visit Detroit Soup as a class; write a one page reflection

Sign up for office hours to review drafts of 1500 word statement

WEEK 14 **Group Project** *The Feast, Service, and the Event*

In Class – Critique visual/ experiential response to the event Capuchin/ Detroit Soup trips

Critiques (Group 2 students 13-28)

Assignment – DUE Weeks 15: Complete image and writing portfolios
DUE Week 15: 1500 word statement

WEEK 15 **Group Project** *The Feast, Service and the Event*

In Class – Final Event (prepare meal for class and friends) (Group 1, students 1-12); Critique visual/ experiential response to the event field trips (either Capuchin or Detroit Soup)

Assignment - Semester ends
Hand in image and writing portfolios and 1500 word statement
