

Colorado State University-Pueblo
College of Humanities and Social Sciences // Department of Art
Fall Term 2011 // Seminar: Performance Art // ART491
Mon & Wed, 4:00 - 6:30pm, AM-110

Instructor: Ellen Mueller
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Hours: Mon & Tue, 3-4pm, and by appointment
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COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course is designed as a survey of *some* of the origins, influences, theories, processes, and manifestations of performance art. We will read, watch, and discuss perspectives on performance art written/created by artists, curators, art historians, and critics. We will view work by artists who consider themselves performance artists. Using this information as a springboard, we will create our own performances, which may include designing, writing, performing, and critique. Specifically, we will think about/discuss/experience:

- Influences / precursors to performance art forms and processes
- The relationship between performance art and popular culture and other art forms
- How performance art has become a means for exploring and debating issues of contemporary and historical concern
- How performance art utilizes the [elements and principles of four-dimensional design](#) (including sound/movement/time/space)
- How the work of performance artists, historians, theorists, curators, and critics can be useful to our own artistic practices
- How our work relates to current thinking about performance theory and practice

We will encounter frustrations as we deal with unexpected road-blocks, and create workarounds that fit within our timeline. These are important skills to practice, as you will do the same when you leave school and enter the world of professional artistic practice. Our weekly discipline will include discussion, active performance creation/viewing, sketchbook entries, and scheduled readings/writings. It is important to know you do not have to be a trained or experienced performer to participate in this course. However you must be willing to explore how performance allows you to develop and refine your artistic practice, regardless of your preferred artistic medium. Please note that an instructor cannot force the effort required to practice art. It must come from a desire and aptitude for struggle. Dedication and willingness to create will ensure your success in this class.

INTENDED STUDENT COMPETENCIES & OUTCOMES

Students who successfully complete this course will have:

1. Basic knowledge and understanding of the vocabulary surrounding performance art and its history, as well as enhanced fluency of visual and time-based language, and the ability to use that language in both their performance practice and critique
2. Analytical skills in determining what elements and principles of design (2/3/4D) are employed in a given performance piece
3. Developed a cursory understanding of their own performative sources and influences
4. Refined skills in experimenting with unfamiliar media
5. Read about and reported on how other artists utilize performative media
6. Discipline to work effectively both in and out of class (timeliness & focus)
7. Increased ability to critically analyze each other's work as well as their own

NOTES ON RESPECT:

The work created in the course may be of a personal and/or controversial nature. Please respect your colleagues and give their work your best attention. If you disagree with a performance or its content, remember that when engaging with others' work you must be a responsible and professional critic and as such must work to make your criticism constructive and descriptive.

BLACKBOARD

You must check e-mail and Blackboard on a regular basis to take this course. Assignments will be dispersed via email/Blackboard.

EMAIL CORRESPONDENCE

Visit [this link](#) for guidelines on email correspondence.

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Attendance and participation are an integral part of this course. Do not miss class, and make sure to participate. If you have special circumstances or needs, please communicate with me as soon as possible. For full policy, visit [this link](#).

ACCOMMODATIONS:

This University abides by the Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, which stipulates that no student shall be denied the benefits of an education "solely by reason of a handicap." If you have a documented disability that may impact your work in this class and for which you may require accommodations, please see the Disability Resource Coordinator as soon as possible to arrange accommodations. In order to receive accommodations, you must be registered with and provide documentation of your disability to: the Disability Resource Office, which is located in the Library and Academic Resources Center, Suite 169.

ACADEMIC DISHONESTY:

"Academic Dishonesty" is defined in the CSU-Pueblo Catalog 2009 as "any form of cheating which results in students giving or receiving unauthorized assistance in an academic exercise or receiving credit for work that is not their own." For more information and for a detailed description of specific acts of academic dishonesty or misconduct, please see pages 42 and 43 of the catalog.

TEXTS

The required texts for this course are

Bishop, Claire, ed. *Participation* (Documents of Contemporary Art). London: Whitechapel and Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 2006.

Doherty, Claire. *Situation* (Documents of Contemporary Art). London: Whitechapel and Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 2009.

Iverson, Margaret, ed. *Chance* (Documents of Contemporary Art). London: Whitechapel and Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 2010.

Be sure to read more about our reading requirements at [this link](#).

COURSE ASSIGNMENTS

Sketchbooks

You will need a small sketchbook exclusively for this class. Please [read the requirements](#).

[Posing Questions](#)

Performances

You will create and present 5 performances over the course of the semester (you may also participate in others). 3 of these performances are structured and ask you to engage in some kind of exercise or activity to generate your work. The remaining two performances are open-ended. You will do a self-analysis of the elements/principles of design involved in your performance. You will also provide feedback to all the other performers via blackboard discussion board.

A note about the performances: As I mention above, you do not have to be a trained or experienced performer to participate in this course. You may accomplish your work in any manner or mode you see fit. You must be willing, however, to *perform*. This means that you will create, script/design/build, rehearse, and stage/present your piece *prior* to your scheduled performance dates. Your audience expects you to prepare your work with commitment, care, and dedication and to devote an appropriate amount of time and thought in doing so. Please do not subject us to unplanned, impromptu, or otherwise hastily considered or prepared work. Likewise, please do not exceed whatever time limits are set for showing your work (including set up and tear down, as appropriate).

[Directions Performance](#)

[Cycle 1 Performance](#)

[Documentation Performance](#)

[Cycle 2 Performance](#)

[Reprise Performance](#)

NOTE: I may use images/video of your work to show as examples of my students' work on my website. I always make sure to give credit to the artist. Please let me know if you do not wish for me to publish your work online.

GRADING POLICY

Read the full grading policy at [this link](#).

SCHEDULE

Visit [this link](#) to view the schedule.