

Walking As Artistic Practice

Course: CSLA-4004-01-S19 (non-credit)

Meets: Saturdays 1-4pm, Room 410

Instructor: Ellen Mueller

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Summer Office Hours: by appointment

- Students will discuss walking-based works after reading, viewing, and experiencing them in person.
- Students will research, brainstorm, plan, and execute their own walking works.

COURSE WEBSITE:

<https://teaching.ellenmueller.com/walking/>

This workshop is designed as a brief survey of some of the origins, theories, processes, and manifestations of walking as art. We will read, watch, and discuss perspectives on walking-based projects. Using this information as a springboard, we will complete walking exercises, and execute our own original walking projects.

Some of the concepts we'll be looking at include the importance of place, modes of documenting, archiving, mapping, and guiding, as well as a comparison of Baudelaire's flâneur versus Situationists' theory of Psychogeography and the dérive. We'll also look at artists such as Francis Alys, Janet Cardiff, Hamish Fulton, Sophie Calle, Richard Long, Marina Abramović and Ulay, Tehching Hsieh, and Jimmy Keuhnle. Students will examine how artists have used field guides, archives, drawings, attire, and maps in their walking practices.

Students can expect to walk, view work, read a little, take some notes, make some rough sketches, reflect, and discuss their work.

3 sessions, 3 hours each, one per week (3 weeks total). Each session we will view the work of 3-4 artists, talk about their approaches, and execute an exercise inspired by this work. Between sessions, students will be asked to do brief reading (2-3 pages) and create a walking project of their own for us to reflect on at the next class session (2 total).

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

- Students will experience some of the history of walking as creative practice, through the execution of various exercises and experiments in walking.



NOTES ON PERSEVERANCE:

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 a variety of activities which may include, but are not limited to, discussion, active installation creation/viewing, sketchbook entries, and scheduled readings/writings. It is important to know you do not have to be a trained artist to participate in this course. However you must be willing to explore how this medium allows you to develop and refine your artistic practice, regardless of your preferred artistic medium. Please note that an instructor, I 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.

NOTES ON COURSE CONTENT:

We're about to experience some content that can be, and has in the past been, considered provocative. People in this course have been offended by what we're about to see, so even if you think this is harmless or funny, keep in mind that this can also offend. Have respect for how other people in the room feel. That said: provocative art might not be directly offensive, but can remind you of difficult experiences, and it can work on you emotionally before your thinking mind has a chance to catch up. This means it can surprise you, and that's ok, and this room is a

place to talk about offendedness and problematic art, and you can also communicate with me via email or office visit. I'll also try to contextualize this art by putting it in its historical moment where it will hopefully make better sense.

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 work 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. Speak in this class with the expectation of being heard, and listen carefully because it is an opportunity to be changed.

Online Policy



You must check e-mail, this website, and our learning management system (Canvas) on a regular basis to take this course. Assignments will be dispersed via these channels and it is your responsibility to stay informed.

When you submit a file, please put your last name into the file-name.

Example: Mueller-first-draft.jpg



Backing Up Your Work.

You will be putting a lot of time and effort into your projects. As such, you are expected to back up your work regularly in order to prevent data loss from failed

media or hard drives. You should keep at least two copies of your work on different drives at all times. When you're finished working for the day, immediately create a backup of your work.

Textbook/Supplies

Students will be asked to bring a sketchbook/notebook and writing utensil, as well as their phone or a camera to take photos. We'll also go outside and practice some walking exercises, so good footwear for walking is advisable.

- Sketchbook/notebook
 - Writing utensil
 - Phone/camera for photo taking
 - Comfortable footwear for walking
 - Recommended: a phone with GPS capability for a mapping activity
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Critique / Identifying Intentions & Results

We will have longer more organized critiques, as well as brief informal critiques during class. During these critiques, you will familiarize yourself with ways of looking, thinking, and talking about art. We will examine the formal and conceptual attributes of each student's work in addition to different approaches to critiquing. The purpose of these critiques is to develop a shared vocabulary, help each other in expanding our technical and conceptual capabilities, and establish a sense of community.

The evaluation for critique is based on participation (which may consist of small group discussion, large group discussion, written comments, online comments, etc). If you have trouble thinking of what to say during critique, remember the components of an artwork [subject, form, content, and context]. If you think about these components, you should be able to think of something to contribute to the conversation.

Artists have a very specific message for each piece of art. That message is frequently misunderstood/ missed. The idea of intentions versus results in its most raw form is essentially what the artist wants to convey and what is actually experienced. The best way to understand the experience of the public's reaction to your work is to request feedback. Peers

and teachers can provide helpful feedback. Descriptive feedback, where a person describes the work as if they are speaking to a blind person, is one approach to understanding how your work reads for the viewer. Interpretive feedback, where a person describes the work's symbolic and/or metaphorical meanings, is another approach. One of the most interesting parts of art is the fact that it can mean something a little bit different to everyone who enjoys it.

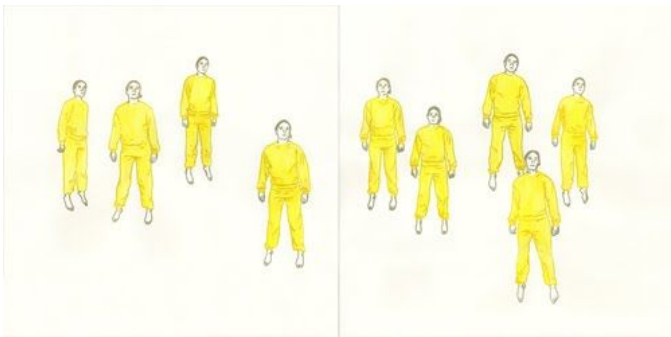
Shared Spaces

Students are expected to help maintain the studio spaces as clean, safe places to work. Please remember to return materials used in class to storage, and to wipe off any work surfaces (tables, stools, keyboards, mice, easels, counters, sinks, etc.). Remember to throw away all trash and to recycle all recyclables. Keeping the studio neat for fellow users is vital to using a shared space and learning to be a professional artist. Faculty are responsible for monitoring studio usage so you may be asked to do something by a professor other than your own; please respond respectfully and promptly.

SHARED USE OF MATERIALS

All shared supplies and tools must remain in the classroom at all times and should always be returned to the appropriate storage location at the end of class. In some cases, students may check out materials, but they must always notify faculty beforehand.

About Your Prof



Feel free to check out my work at EllenMueller.com