

West Virginia Wesleyan College // School of Fine Arts & Humanities Department of Art

Spring Term 2013 // Intermedia: Natural vs UNnatural // ART288

Classroom: McCuskey Room 112 // Mon/Wed 3-5:30pm

Professor: Ellen Mueller // Office: McCuskey Room 105

Office Hours: Tues & Thur, 2:30-5:00pm & by appointment

Email: mueller_e@wwvc.edu

COURSE DESCRIPTION

BRIEFLY:

This course is designed as a survey of some of the origins, influences, theories, processes, and manifestations of video, installation, and performance art. Due to the wide ranging parameters of these fields, we will narrow our focus to works that address the concept of “natural vs. unnatural,” examining the world we have made vs. the world that has made us. We will read, watch, and discuss perspectives on these art forms written/created by artists, curators, art historians, and critics. We will view work by artists who consider themselves intermedia artists. Using this information as a springboard, we will create our own videos, installations, and performances.

EXPANDED:

Students will gain basic knowledge and understanding of a wide range of materials and processes such as video, installation and performance. They will also gain exposure to a variety of applications of materials including video editing, spacial configuration, and engineering interactivity.

- Through reading and discussion assignments, students will think about/discuss/experience influences / precursors to these art forms and processes.
- Via the development of discussion questions and the participation in group discussion, students will study the relationship between installation art and popular culture and other art forms.
- Students will develop a cursory understanding of their own sources and influences by brainstorming, researching and presenting their findings on the subject.
- Students will practice identifying and utilizing the elements and principles of design in a 4- dimensional environment by creating and critiquing videos, installations, and performances.
- Students will gain enhanced fluency in visual language and the ability to use that language, both written and oral, in their personal intermedia practice and public critique.

- Students will strengthen their ability to form creative ideas through conceptual assignments.
- Students will strengthen awareness of the historical context of intermedia by looking at both historical and contemporary artists as frames of reference for their practice.
- Students will begin to learn the professional practices of an artist in terms of documenting their work and self-discipline to complete all work in a timely fashion. Students will practice taking photos and videos of their work, turning in a documentation disk of all their work at the end of the semester. Students will also prepare for and complete an exhibition of their work in a gallery setting.

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 discussion, active installation creation/viewing, sketchbook entries, and scheduled readings/writings. It is important to know you do not have to be a trained or experienced performer or installation 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 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 see 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 safe place to talk about offendedness and problematic art, and you can also communicate with me by email or in my office if you like. I'll also try to put this art 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 an installation 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.

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