

PHOTOGRAPHY: FIGURE/GROUND

PGY 2442C - SPRING 2017 - 3 CREDIT HOURS

MEETING HOURS: 6 Hrs. T/R Periods 2-4 (8:30am - 11:30am) **LOCATION:**
FAD329

INSTRUCTOR: Molly Edwards

OFFICE HOURS: T/R 3:00-4:00PM

EMAIL: mollyeedwards@ufl.edu

FIGURE/GROUND OBJECTIVES:

This course will explore lens based imaging with a conceptual emphasis. In the age of information, we must now learn to see the image and photography through a new lens. This course will provide students with an introductory understanding of post internet art with a focus on image based work and working artists of our current time. Students will engage with ideas such as appropriation, representation, reproduction and aura. Students will look at a range of artists and writers such as Hito Steyerl, Artie Vierkant and Walter Benjamin, and Boris Groys.

FIGURE/GROUND METHODS OF STUDY:

The goal of the course is for students to think critically about artistic production and to develop the skills to speak about their own work and the work of their peers. Students will engage with art historians, theorists and artists in seminar style group discussions. Students will also be assigned three projects over the course of the semester. Students are expected to explore and discover new ways of working, and to exhibit their work professionally for critiques. Individual meetings will be conducted regularly throughout the semester. In meetings, students will propose ideas and show in progress work.

FIGURE/GROUND COURSE UNITS:

-Recommended Materials

Students may work with digital and/or analog photographic techniques. Suggested materials for this course include

- Portable external hard drive

- Roll of Inkjet paper

- Digital SLR (though several available for checkout through the photo area for overnight use)

-Dropbox

Dropbox will be utilized for this course as a location to access all required readings. Please print a copy of the required reading for the day that we will be going over it in class; no laptops or tablets.

-WeChat

WeChat is an app that will be utilized for this course as a resource for updates or revisions to the calendar, announcements, and general questions (that are not personal or do not require an email). WeChat can also be used during critiques. Students can take notes for their classmates, or send references that are relevant to the work they are showing during a critique. WeChat will function as an archive for the class.

FIGURE/GROUND STUDIO EVALUATION AND GRADING:

- 20% Participation and attendance
- 30% Reading Assignments and statements
- 50% Critiques/Projects

Letter Grade and corresponding grade points

A	A-	B+	B	B-	C+	C	C-	D+	D	D-	F
4.0	3.67	3.33	3.0	2.67	2.33	2.0	1.67	1.33	1.0	.67	0

Specific criteria for grading will be listed on each assignment sheet but will equally consider: adherence to the assignment parameters, research/studio practice, concept development, formal resolution, and craft/presentation. Late projects will be graded down a letter grade for each day they are late.

FIGURE/GROUND CLASS DEMEANOR POLICY:

Students are expected to assist in maintaining a classroom environment that is conducive to learning. In order to assure that all students have the opportunity to gain from time spent in class, students are prohibited from engaging in any form of distracting behavior.

Inappropriate behavior in the classroom will result in, at least, a request to leave class.

<http://www.aa.ufl.edu/aa/Rules/4016.htm>

ATTENDANCE:

Students are expected to attend all classes. You are required to work/participate the duration of the scheduled class period. Participation includes having completed work during all scheduled classes and active participation through shared ideas and commentary. Good attendance and punctuality are expected for this class and will affect your grade. Roll will be taken at every class and you will be considered late if you arrive after roll has been taken. Three “tardies” will equal one unexcused absence. Two unexcused absences will be allowed. The third unexcused absence will lower your participation grade by five points and so on. A total of five unexcused absences will result in you receiving zero participation points. Excused absences require a doctor’s note or documentation.

LATE WORK:

All projects, reading responses, etc. must be completed on time for full credit. Specific due dates are stated on each project sheet and are announced in class. Failure to complete any project on time will result in a drop of one full letter grade for the assignment. If an assignment states that a project is due at the beginning of class, turning it in at the end or after class is considered late. You must have work finished before the start of class on critique days or your work will not be critiqued and your project grade will be lowered. It is the student’s responsibility to turn in all work on time. On critique days, students will be given 15 minutes at the start of class to install their work, unless prior arrangements have been made.

CLASS COMMUNICATIONS:

Students must check their school email accounts and the class WeChat regularly. Students are responsible for any information, deadlines, and updates emailed to their webmail accounts or sent to the WeChat.

CELL PHONES:

Students should refrain from the excessive and disruptive use of cellular phones in the classroom. Limited and productive use of phones will be permitted on a case by case basis.

SA+AH HEALTH AND SAFETY:

Please familiarize yourself the School of Art and Art History' s Health and Safety policies by reviewing the handbook here: (<http://www.arts.ufl.edu/art/healthandsafety>).

CALANDER (SUBJECT TO CHANGE):

Jan 5: Introduce syllabus, health and safety handbook, and WeChat Assignment: Read *Create Dangerously* by Albert Camus, come to next class with 3 questions/concerns with reading

Jan 10: Discuss Camus, introduce project one, Assignment: Read *The Image Object* by Artie Vierkant, come to next class with 3 questions/concerns about reading, also come to class with 2 artists for project one proposal

Jan 12: Discuss Vierkant individual meetings for project one

Jan 17: Discuss Vierkant, studio work day

Jan 19: Mid process Critique for project one

Jan 24: studio work day and individual meetings

Jan 26: Project one Critique

Jan 31: Project one Critique, Assignment: read Walter Benjamin' s *Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction*, bring 3 questions/concerns to next class

Feb 2: Discuss Benjamin, introduce project 2

Feb 7: Discuss Benjamin, individual meetings, Assignment: read Hito Steyerl' s *In Defense of The Poor Image*, come to next class with 3 questions/concerns about reading

Feb 9: Discuss Hito Steyerl, studio work day

Feb 14: Mid process Critique for project two

Feb 16: Studio Work day and individual meetings

Feb 21: Project Two Critique

Feb 23: Project Two Critique, Assignment: Read Hito Steyerl' s *Spam of the Earth*, come to next class with 3 questions/concerns about reading

Feb 28: Discuss Hito Steyerl's *Spam of the Earth*, Introduce Project three, Research day

Mar 2: Individual meetings and studio day, Assignment: Read Boris Groys' *From Image to Image File*, come to next class with 3 questions/concerns

Mar 14: Discuss Groys, studio day

Mar 16: Discuss Groys, studio day

Mar 21: Individual meetings, studio day

Mar 23: Tentative studio day

Mar 28: In process critiques project 3

Mar 30: In Process critiques Project 3

Apr 4: individual meetings and studio work day

Apr 6: No class, studio work day. I will be available for individual meetings.

Apr 11: Project three Critique

Apr 13: Project three Critique

Apr 18: During class time, please bring digital copies of your documented work from all three projects.

PROJECT ONE: PHOTOGRAPHY IS MAGIC



John Houck

“Purposefully destabilized photographic practices are coming into play, and photographic objects no longer necessarily constitute the formal conclusion - the end result - of artistic inquiries” - Charlotte Cotton

-Students will be given a list of contemporary image based artists. After reading Artie Veirkant’ s text, *The Image Object*, students will choose one artist whose work they find formally and conceptually compelling and also relevant to their own practice. They will appropriate this artists’ aesthetics or ideas to make their own work.

-Mid Process Critique: January 19th

-Critique: January 26th and January 31st

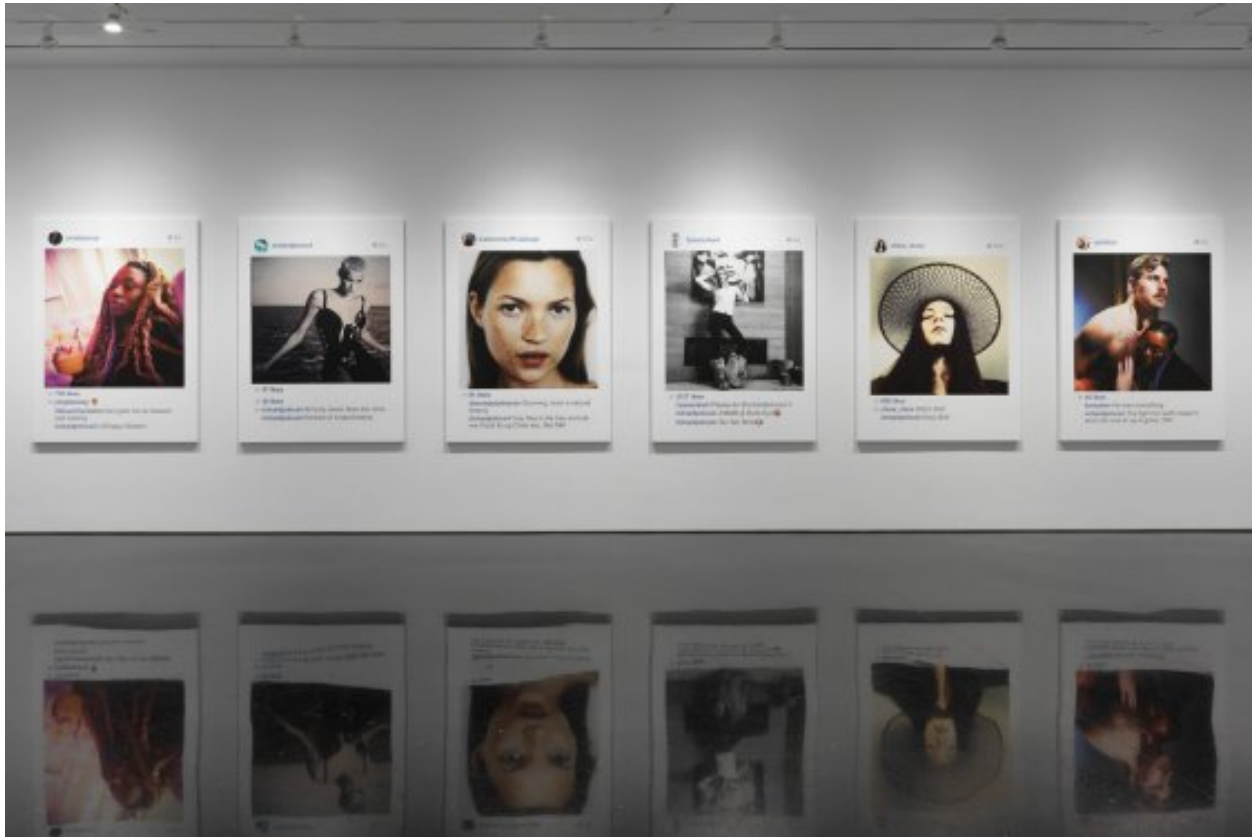
-Project Requirements:

-Unless otherwise discussed, students are expected to have 6 photographic prints by the mid process critique day and 12 photographic prints by the final critique

-Prints should be on the wall or installed within the first 10 minutes of class

-Students are required to have a 250-word written statement about their work

PROJECT TWO: IS ART ORIGINAL?



Richard Prince

“The illiterate of the future will not be the man who cannot read the alphabet, but the one who cannot take a photograph.” - Walter Benjamin

After reading Walter Benjamin’s *The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction*, students may work in any image based medium they see fit for the concept of the work itself. First, ideas and concepts will develop through research and the reading of the text, from there students will flesh out an artistic project. The project can be photographic prints, video, installation, etc. as long as it is informed by the reading.

Themes that students should think about include but are not limited to:

- The reproduction of art and what this means speaks about in terms of authenticity and authorship

- The aura or “forged” aura
- The cult of false personality
- Art and the masses
- Technology rendering art as impure

-Project Requirements:

- Unless otherwise discussed, students are expected to have 6 photographic prints by the mid process critique day and 12 photographic prints by the final critique
- Prints should be on the wall or installed within the first 10 minutes of class
- Students are required to have a 250-word written statement about their work

PROJECT THREE: FINAL PROJECT



Hito Steyerl

Poor images are dragged around the globe as commodities or their effigies, as gifts or as bounty. They spread pleasure or death threats, conspiracy theories or bootlegs, resistance or stultification. Poor images show the rare, the obvious, and the unbelievable—that is, if we can still manage to decipher it” - Hito Steyerl

After reading texts by Hito Steyerl, *In Defense of the Poor Image* and *Spam of the Earth: Withdrawal from Representation* and Boris Groys' *Image to Image file and Back*, students will be asked to make a project responding to the themes and ideas from the texts. Students may work in any image based medium they see fit for their concept. First, ideas and concepts will develop through research and the reading of the texts, from there students will flesh out an artistic project. A written statement about the work will be expected as well. Final work should be exhibition ready on the day of critique.

Themes that students should think about include but are not limited to:

- Socio-technological conditions of visual culture
- representation and identity
- the relationship between art and capital
- the poor image

-Project Requirements:

- Unless otherwise discussed, students are expected to have 10 photographic prints by the mid process critique day and 16 photographic prints by the final critique
- Prints should be on the wall or installed within the first 10 minutes of class
- Students are required to have a 500-word written statement about their work