

**Artists Video**  
**ART 4043/5043/Spring 2008/3 credits**  
**Tuesday 1:35-4:25**  
**Brownson Wing 12**

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**Course Description**

This is an introductory class in Artists Video with emphasis on Apple Final Cut Pro as the primary tool for digital manipulation of video. Projects will explore ways of working with ideas of temporality, autobiography, narrative, seriality, notation and process, site-specificity, documentary, and private and social space. The emphasis in the class will be on learning about Video Art, its history, and its place in multimedia.

This course is geared towards studying and producing video based in a visual arts tradition. The focus is on work by artists and independent producers, who aim to produce poetic, penetrating, passionate alternatives to the ideas and images seen in modernist art, mainstream entertainment, advertising, and network news. This includes an examination of current video trends toward issue-oriented work such as media analysis and criticism, activist video, and personal narratives about identity and individual experience.

Lectures, video screenings, and assigned readings will explore the work of artists and critics who reflect the diverse sensibilities indicated above. Class time also includes technical demonstrations of cameras, lighting, audio, and editing equipment, lab work, and critiques of student work.

Prerequisite: *Computer Graphics 1*

**Course/Learning Objectives**

After the successful completion of this course the student should:

1. Demonstrate a strong foundation of visual and aural aesthetics for the process of video production
2. Be able to explain the process of pre-production, production and post-production
3. Be able to explain the different approaches to and uses for the medium of video
4. Demonstrate basic skills in lighting, shooting and editing video
5. Demonstrate/explain the underlying technical concepts of the video process
6. Demonstrate the use of proper media production terminology
7. Be able to speak about the history of video art and its place in the broader art world
8. Be able to speak about what he/she has created and place the work in a broader context

**Studio Work**

Four projects must be completed by the due date and times. Project work must be carried out thoughtfully, with care and attention given to the demands of your ideas. You must use your time well and be realistic in planning the material scale of your projects in relation to the time and money you can afford to spend on them. The instructor will help you to organize your time, materials, and working process.

**Materials**

Students are responsible for purchasing a journal/sketchbook, props/objects, mini-DV tapes, DVD-Rs, etc. Purchase these supplies as you need them. In addition, you will each need to purchase an external hard drive. They are on sale in the bookstore or you may purchase one online. If you are unsure what to buy please ask me!

**Journal/sketchbook**

Buy a blank book of a size that you will enjoy carrying with you everywhere. Use this journal/sketchbook for a few minutes everyday. Draw in it, write in it, collect and paste found pictures and text in it. Use these notes to help you develop ideas for your projects. Make a concerted effort to attend current exhibitions, local art events, and surf the web; Use your journal to record questions about and responses to these events, and to the readings assigned for this class. Always bring your journal with you to class meetings.

**Readings**

You will read critical and historical essays (these will be provided for you). Everyone in the class will take turns presenting and responding to readings. You should use your journals for note taking.

**Recommended texts on reserve in the library:**

The Visual Story, Bruce Block, Focal Press, ISBN 0240804678

Setting Up Your Shots, Jeremy Vineyard, Michael Weise Productions, ISBN 0941188736

The Five C's of Cinematography, Joseph Mascelli, Silman-James Press, ISBN 187950541x

The Filmmakers Handbook, Steven Ascher & Edward Pincus, Plume, ISBN 0452279577

**Attendance/Participation**

Attendance is mandatory. More than one unexcused absence will lower your grade. Make sure to contact me if you are going to be absent. Absence is not an excuse for coming to the next class unprepared. You must contact a classmate or the Professor to find out what you missed. Habitual lateness will also reduce your grade.

This is a class where students are expected to show both complete and trial cuts of their own work to the class. Thoughtful feedback is essential to improving your work and the work of your fellow classmates. I will be grading your participation based on how helpful I think your comments or questions are to addressing relevant concerns of the work at hand. I will be taking notes on this throughout the semester. Failure to participate in discussions and critiques will affect your semester grade.

**Equipment and Facilities**

- \* Students have lab access during hours when there are not classes scheduled as well as on the weekend
- \* There are cameras available for you to checkout from Media Services. Checkout period is 1 day.
- \* Students are responsible for backing up their own work. No excuses for lost or damaged work.

**Grading**

Your grade will also largely be an indication of how much of your own potential you have fulfilled over the course of the term. The semester grade will be determined by a combination of attendance, quality of work produced, participation in discussions and

critiques, and individual achievement, growth and enthusiasm. Late work will not be accepted.

The scaled importance of each element is as follows:

60% Studio Work

20% Attendance/ Participation

20% Readings/Journal

### **Disability Statement**

If you believe that you have a disability that may warrant accommodations in this class, I urge you to notify me immediately so that together we can work to develop methods of addressing needed accommodations in this class. You must also contact the Academic Dean's office.

### **Academic Misconduct**

Plagiarism, cheating and other forms of academic dishonesty are prohibited. Students guilty of academic misconduct either directly or indirectly through participation or assistance, are immediately responsible to the instructor of the class. In addition to other possible disciplinary sanctions that may be imposed through the regular instructional procedures as a result of academic misconduct, the instructor has the authority to assign an F or a zero in the course.

### **Class Rules**

- \* All cell phones must be turned OFF
- \* Students are required to complete the readings to prepare for class
- \* No disrespect of any kind, toward any one will be tolerated
- \* Oral participation and hands-on project participation in class is mandatory and counts towards your attendance/participation grade and project grades
- \* No food, drinking, or smoking in the facilities
- \* All equipment must be returned to its proper place before you leave the facilities

**Please note:** this is NOT a software course. If you are expecting to get an A because you master Final Cut Pro, you will be disappointed. Students are expected to develop intellectual and creative skills around digital video, to produce engaging work, and to show individual development.

### **Graduate Credit**

Students taking the course for graduate credit will be held to a higher standard. Each graduate student will also go to NYC and view an art show which includes a video component. The student will then deliver a presentation to the class about the show making sure to address issues of technical and conceptual merit of the work.

## **Assignments**

### **Assignment #1: Place**

Place is the organization of space for purposes which may be practical, psychological, spiritual, sociological, political, economic, or aesthetic. For the purposes of this project, investigate your attachment to a site or space which figures prominently in your everyday life. As part of your notation work, research the physical and historic facts associated with the site. Use this information to begin to frame your material and procedural decisions to "work" the site (by documenting it, embellishing it, revealing something concealed, or transforming it). The "place" you end up with may be actual, imagined, remembered, or a combination of all of these things.

### **Assignment #2: Time**

We organize time in "natural" ways (by seasons, bodily functions, the shifting quality of light), in "unconscious" ways (by memories and dreams), in "institutional" way (by bus schedules, project deadlines, long queues at the bank), in "social" ways (by family vacations, formal dinners, awkward conversations), in "cultural" ways ( a 4-minute pop tune, a 3-hour opera with 15-minute intermissions, a 100-minute "feature-length" film). Time is discussed in economic terms by employers and in political terms by employees. Develop work that focuses on time as a medium, as a way of organizing your work process and ideas, and as a subject matter.

### **Assignment #3: Rework (Place or Time)**

Revisit either you Place or Time video and rework it based on suggestions you received in critique. This may simply mean re-editing. It may mean much more!

### **Assignment #4: Identity**

Identity speaks of our contact with the world, the private colliding with the public, locating our "selves" in our experiences with others. Investigate ways in which you personalize or distance or confuse or give importance to the things you say. Picture the physical space between you and your viewers/listeners; is this space intimate or impersonal, ordered or chaotic, confessional, informative, shared or differentiated? Use "voice" (figuratively or literally) to enter this space in order to affirm, transforms or rupture it. Consider modes of address such as satire, narrative, ritual, role-playing, manifestos, rants, and rumors.

**Course Schedule (may be revised, with warning, throughout semester)**

**Tuesday 1/15 - class 1**

Introduction to class and to one another  
Syllabus review and course expectations  
Intro to video art lecture

*For next class:*

*Begin "Place" sketchwork*

**1/22 - class 2**

Intro to narrative and documentary strategies, Real-Time Video  
Intro to camera, mics and lights  
Discuss "Place" concepts and approaches

*For next class:*

*Finish "Place" sketchwork*

**1/29 - class 3**

Discuss sketchwork  
Intro to Final Cut Pro  
Editing exercise

*For next class:*

*Shoot "Place" footage*

**2/5 - class 4**

More on Final Cut Pro  
Editing time in class

*For next class:*

*Edit "Place" video*

**2/12 - class 5**

Critique "Place" assignments  
Intro to Video Activism and alternative venues  
Intro to "Time" assignment

*For next class:*

*Begin "Time" sketchwork*

**2/19 - class 6**

Discuss "Time" concepts and approaches  
More examples  
More editing tips

*For next class:*

*Shoot "Time" footage*

**2/26 - class 7**

Preview "Time" raw footage

More examples

More editing tips

Editing in class

*For next class:*

*Re-Shoot "Time" footage/Edit*

**3/4 - class 8**

Editing in class

*For next class:*

*Edit "Time"*

**3/11 - Spring Break****3/18 - class 9**

Critique "Time" assignments

Intro to Assignment #3

Sadie Benning, Alex Bag

*For next class:*

*Begin "Identity" sketchwork and revisit "Place" and "Time" videos*

**3/25 - class 10**

Critique revisited "Place" and "Time" videos

Discuss "Identity" concepts and approaches

Experimental strategies

*For next class:*

*Finish sketchwork/shoot "Identity" footage*

**4/1 - class 11**

Critique Raw footage

Discuss editing strategies

*For next class:*

*Finish shooting "Identity" footage/begin editing*

**4/8 - class 12**

Editing time in class

*For next class:*

*Keep working*

**4/15 - class 13**

Critique Rough Cuts

Editing time in class

*For next class:*

*Finish project*

**4/22 - class 14**

Final Screening!!