

**STA 179, Photography on Location: Still Moving, Department
of Art History & Visual Culture, Summer S2, 2019**

I. COURSE INFORMATION

Instructor: Marco G. Ferrari
Instructor's Email: mferrari@fus.edu
Office Hours: by appointment
Class location: FUS, Lowerre Academic Center, Room 11
Class meeting times: MTWTH, 2:30 PM - 5:05 PM

II. COURSE DESCRIPTION

Aimed at beginning and intermediate students exploring the countryside, towns, villages, and interiors of Ticino, this digital photography course focuses on the production of still and moving image based work, probing how location is used as a material to create form and inspire content in contemporary photography and cinema. Readings, screenings, discussions, museum visits and creative image based works are essential components of the course. Aspects of image capturing, available lighting, digital manipulation and editing a time-based video will be covered and experimented with. The key aspects of photography to be studied in this course have been divided into four stages: planning, picture making, selecting/editing and presenting. Students will follow this cycle of production for the four creative projects. In particular, this studio course is a way to facilitate the awareness of this interaction through fundamental technical exercises in looking, listening and making--connecting the still and moving image craft to documentary, fine art, and narrative genres. (Students will need 30 CHF for art exhibit visits and journal)

III. RATIONALE

This is a studio course that focuses on the production of image-based work, exploring how location (time and space) is used as a material to create form and inspire content in digital photography.

IV. COURSE GOALS

1. To explore the creative process by being introduced to fundamental techniques in pre-production, production and post-production using digital photography.
2. Through historical and theoretical readings that explore the ability to see the world photographically and find creative solutions to "capture" or "interpret" that vision.
3. To be an attentive spectator and cultivate the skill of critiquing, reflecting sincerely and meaningfully on readings, discussions, screenings, and in peer review contexts.

V. SPECIFIC LEARNING OUTCOMES

An important part of the fabric of contemporary society is made up of the images we produce and receive everyday. How these images affect us is tied to how and why we produce them. This studio course

is a way to facilitate the awareness of this interaction through fundamental technical exercises in looking, listening and making--connecting the still image craft to documentary, fine art, and narrative genres.

The course will strive to answer: How do students perceive their relationship to the environment? How can that relationship be translated into a visual vocabulary? How can this vocabulary be refined, through the craft of writing, making and presenting? Ultimately, how can the environment itself participate in facilitating the students' creative expression?

VI. REQUIRED TEXTS AND MATERIALS

All required readings are posted on Moodle along with auxiliary readings that can help expand on content. These auxiliary readings will generally be on technical aspects of production or to expand on theoretical topics discussed in class. Additional material may be distributed in class and uploaded onto the course home page (STA 179/LECT/1-2019/SUMMER/S2).

VII. ASSESSMENT OVERVIEW

The success of this course depends on the commitment of the students to engage creatively with theoretical and technical course matter. The student's openness and sensitivity towards their fellow classmates expression will allow for greater growth and exploration in the class. Evaluation of all student work will take into consideration the student's availability to experiment intellectually and creatively in a way that demonstrates a thoughtful consideration and creative interpretation of the themes and technical matter raised through course readings, screenings and class discussions. Depending on the general level of engagement by the class quizzes may be given with proper notice. Written feedback will be given for each project and an individual meeting midway through the course will take place to go over the student's current status. *Late Assignments will affect your grade.

- 1) General Class Preparation, including active participation in class discussions, *Discussion leads, and Peer Critiques (20%)
- 2) Four Creative Projects (15% each = 60%)
- 3) Each Creative Project will be accompanied by a "Response Text" (5% each = 20%)

*Discussion Leads: Each week students will be assigned to lead a discussion for the following class. This entails writing two observations and two questions based off the readings for the assigned class. These will be written and emailed to me by the beginning of the class they are assigned to lead.

VIII. ASSESSMENT DETAILS

PROJECTS

Due to the summer session course structure and the nature of the creative process you are required to work on your projects in and out of class. This includes allowing ample time to plan, capture images and edit your projects.

Project I: Streets and Paths--Built & Natural Environments
(presentation of 10-15 images)

Project II: Portraits--Mis-en-scène (presentation of 10-15 images)

Project III: Intervention--Image within Place (presentation of 3 images)

Project IV: Cinè-Roman--Narrative Sequence (2-3 minutes)

WRITINGS

Each project will be accompanied by a "Response Text," referencing the theoretical and historical readings, screenings and site visits assigned in class while explaining the student's personal vision and technical challenges encountered while creating the work. Though this is a studio course, evaluating one's own expression will help to highlight certain forms that took place during the creative process. Reflecting on your own work is not an easy exercise, but through repetition certain tendencies and themes will come to the surface that can help inform your craft. Some projects will also have additional writing components as well.

ATTENDANCE

This course is only a mere four weeks long, yet is very collaborative and very hands on. Regular attendance is required. Two absences in class will result in a full letter drop in the final grade. In the case of excused absences due to documented illness or family emergencies, please present a dean's note as soon as possible. In the event of absence, the student is responsible for all new assignments and information given during class time.

IX. GRADING POLICIES AND EXPECTATIONS

Written feedback and grades are given throughout the course following each assignment. Any concern over grades will be indicated by mid-course. Criteria for final grades:

A = Outstanding participation and attendance, asks questions and embraces the process, substantial growth is evident by the end of the course

B = Above average participation and attendance, palpable growth is evident by the end of the course

C = Average execution of assignments, participation and attendance, little or no growth is evident by the end of the course

D = Well below average of the above

F = Unsatisfactory work, participation, and attendance

X. HOW TO DO WELL IN THIS COURSE (POLICIES / REQUIREMENTS)

EQUIPMENT

Students enrolled in this course must provide their own digital image recording apparatus, and the course carries a nominal fee for art supplies and travel costs. After the first day of class students are expected to bring their recording device to class for the remainder of the course.

CLASS ETIQUETTE

The following is to help you cultivate professional demeanor in your life and to develop a respectful relationship with your classmates and professor. Not following these guidelines can impact your participation and attendance grade.

General: Read the syllabus and visit the class website. 99.9% of your questions will be answered there.

In-class: Arrive on time and remain in class during the duration of class. If you must leave, do not leave right at the start of class (when important announcements are being made), during student presentations and during screenings. Chronic tardiness will impact your grade.

Class discussion: Lessons are built around class discussion, so be prepared to discuss the assigned material during class. Please come with informed ideas and opinions.

Missing class: If you miss class, you do not need to email the professor to ask what you missed or what you need to cover. All that information is on the class syllabus and it is not necessary for the professor to type up and email you the lecture when you can get the information from the course readings and your classmates. You can also meet with the professor before the following class to ask questions.

Email: Professors maintain regular working hours and have office hours. Please do not email on the weekend or the night before class and expect an immediate response. When emailing, please include something in the email text. Do not just send an email with a subject line and attachment.

Phones and computers: Phones are strictly forbidden in class unless being used specifically for an assignment. If you use one, you will be counted as absent (after one warning). Computers and tablets are allowed on a case-by-case basis. Please ask for permission before using computers in class. All computers must be closed during screenings of media.

Reviewing assignment drafts: In some special cases and given adequate warning, students concerned about their grades can discuss drafts of their projects during office hours.

Assignment approval: Most assignments require topic approval. Make sure you understand the assignment requirements and submit your proposal in a timely manner. Assignments that need topic approval that are not formally approved will not receive credit.

Assignment extensions: Under special circumstances extensions are given, but you must first ask for permission. If you submit an assignment late without first asking for an extension, your grade will be affected by the normal penalty.

Grades: Do not argue about your grade. Grades are not a form of punishment or reward, and are not a reflection of who you are as a human being. Rather, grades serve as a signpost of where you are at in terms of skills, abilities and quality of work in relation to the assignment. It is there to help you understand the areas where you need to improve your work.

XI. ACADEMIC INTEGRITY: STATEMENT ON CHEATING AND PLAGIARISM

A student whose actions are deemed by the University to be out of sympathy with the ideals, objectives or the spirit of good conduct as fostered by the University and Swiss community, may be placed on Disciplinary Probation or become subject to dismissal from the University. Cheating is a dishonest action out of sympathy with the ideals, objectives and spirit of the University. Furthermore, cheating reflects negatively on one's personal integrity and is unjust to those students who have studied.

See the Academic Catalog for full statement:
<https://www.fus.edu/academics/academic-catalog>

XII. RESOURCES AVAILABLE

Please see Moodle for a list of available resources

XIII. COURSE SCHEDULE

***Please note the schedule is subject to change**

WEEK 1

*Reading to be completed by Monday July 8: Rebekah Modrak and Bill Anthes, "Theory: Seeing, Perceiving, and Mediating Vision" in *Reframing Photography: Theory and Practice* (London: Routledge, 2011), Chapter 1, 3-48.

Monday, July 1

- Introductions, course overview, questionnaire
- Luigi Malerba, "Consuming the View," in *Italian Tales An Anthology of Contemporary Italian Fiction*, ed Massimo Riva (New Haven, CT: Yale Press, 2004), 5-7.
- Viewing: Steve McQueen, *Gravesend*, 2007 and other works

Due Tuesday, July 2

1. Reading: Susan Sontag, "In Plato's Cave," in *On Photography* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1977), 1-19.
2. Bring recording device to class for the remainder of the course

Tuesday, July 2

- Discussion on assigned reading
- Demo: Camera Basics--depth of field and exposure; in-class photo assignment; photo organization and using "preview"
- Viewing: Henri Cartier Bresson documentaries
- Assignment Overview, Project I--Streets and Paths

Due Wednesday, July 3

1. Project I: Capture Images (minimum 10)

Wednesday, July 3

- Project I: Gather, Review and Adjust Images
- Viewings and Discussion: Documentary and Contemporary Photographers

Due Thursday, July 4

1. Project I: Written Meditations of a Place (send via email by 9am)
2. Project I: Capture Images (minimum 10)

Thursday, July 4

- Project I: Review of Written Meditations of a Place and Continue to Organize and Adjust Images (should have at least 20)
- Viewing: tbd

Due Monday, July 8

1. Project I: Capture Remaining Images (minimum 10 a day)
2. *Reminder, reading to be completed by Monday July 11: Rebekah Modrak and Bill Anthes, "Theory: Seeing, Perceiving, and Mediating Vision" in *Reframing Photography: Theory and Practice* (London: Routledge, 2011), Chapter 1, 3-48.

WEEK 2

*Reading to be completed by Monday June 15: Rebekah Modrak and Bill Anthes, "Theory: Light and Shadow" in *Reframing Photography: Theory and Practice* (London: Routledge, 2011), Chapter 2, 110-136.

Monday, July 8

- Project I: Select, Adjust and Create Slideshow of 10-15 images for Tuesday Presentation
- Demo: Camera Basics--Framing and Light
- Viewings: Portrait and Contemporary Artists
- Assignment Overview, Project II--Portraits

Due Tuesday, July 9

1. Project I: Presentation and Response Text (send by 9am)

Tuesday, July 9

- **Presentations: Project I (critiques)**
- In-class reading/assignment

Due Wednesday, June 10

1. Reading: Susan Sontag, "The Image-World," in *On Photography* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1977), 119-141.

Wednesday, July 10

- Field Trip and Discussion (in relation to assigned reading). Location TBD.

Due Thursday, July 11

1. Project II: Proposal
2. Project II: Capture Images (minimum 10)

Thursday, July 11

- Demo: Photoshop Overview
- Viewings and Discussions: Portrait and Contemporary Photographers
- Project II: Proposal Meeting and Gather, Adjust and Work on Images

Due Monday, July 15

1. Project II: Capture Remaining Images
2. *Reminder, reading to be completed by Monday July 18: Rebekah Modrak and Bill Anthes, "Theory: Light and Shadow" in *Reframing Photography: Theory and Practice* (London: Routledge, 2011), Chapter 2, 110-136.

WEEK 3

*Reading to be completed by Monday July 24: Rebekah Modrak and Bill Anthes, "Theory: Series and Sequence" in *Reframing Photography: Theory and Practice* (London: Routledge, 2011), Chapter 4, 320-348.

Monday, July 15

- Project II: Select, Adjust and Create Slideshow of 10-15 images for Tuesday Presentation
- Assignment Overviews: Project III--Intervention & Project IV--Cinè-Roman
- Viewings: Chris Marker, *La Jetée*, 28 minutes, 1962; and other photographers/artists

Due Tuesday, July 16

1. Project II: Presentation and Response Text (send by 9am)

Tuesday, July 16

- **Presentations: Project II (critiques)**
- In class assignment/reading

Wednesday, July 17

- Project III examples
- Contemporary Photography Viewings
- Photoshop Demo: Text and Layering

Due Thursday, July 18

1. Project IV: Visual Proposal
2. Readings: Inger Christensen, "Watersteps," in *Butterfly Valley: A Requiem* (New York: New Directions Pub, 2004), 21-37.
3. Alexandre Astruc, "The Birth of a New Avant-Garde: La Camera-Stylo," in *The New Wave: Critical Landmarks*, ed. Peter Graham and Ginette Vincendeau (London: BFI, 2009), 1-5.

Thursday, July 18

- Discussion on Readings
- Project IV: Proposal Review
- Demo: Final Cut Express Overview-- editing image, text and sound

Due Monday July 22

1. Project III: Proposal
2. Project IV (cine-roman): Capture Images and Gather Material
3. Reading: Sergei Eisenstein, "The Cinematographic Principle and

the Ideogram,” in *Film Form: Essays in Film Theory* (New York: Harcourt, Brace, 1949), 29-44.

4. *Reminder, reading to be completed by Monday July 25: Rebekah Modrak and Bill Anthes, “Theory: Series and Sequence” in *Reframing Photography: Theory and Practice* (London: Routledge, 2011), Chapter 4, 320-348.

WEEK 4

Monday, July 22

- Discussion on Readings (Eisenstein and *Reframing Photography: Theory and Practice* (London: Routledge, 2011), Chapter 4, 320-348.)
- Photography Viewings
- Project III and IV: editing

Due Tuesday, July 23

1. Reading: J. Krishnamurti, Chapter 11 and 12 in *Freedom from the Known* (New York: Harper and Row, 1969).
2. Project III: Bring Documented Images

Tuesday, July 23

- Discussion on Krishnamurti Readings
- Project III: Selecting Images for Presentation
- Project IV (cine-roman): Editing

Due Wednesday, July 24

1. Project III Presentations

Wednesday, July 24

- **Project III: Presentations (critiques)**
- Project IV (cine-roman): Final Edits and Exporting
- Image selection from previous projects for printing

Due Thursday, July 25

- Project IV (cine-roman): Video and Response Text (due 9am)

Thursday, July 25

- **Presentations: Project IV (critiques)**

(END)

XIV. BIBLIOGRAPHY OF ASSIGNED READINGS

Astruc, Alexandre. “The Birth of a New Avant-Garde: La Camera-Stylo,” in *The New Wave: Critical Landmarks*, ed. Peter Graham and Ginette Vincendeau (London: BFI, 2009), 1-5.

Christensen, Inger. “Watersteps,” in *Butterfly Valley: A Requiem* (New York: New Directions Pub, 2004), 21-37.

Eisenstein, Sergei. "The Cinematographic Principle and the Ideogram," in *Film Form: Essays in Film Theory* (New York: Harcourt, Brace, 1949), 29-44.

Krishnamurti, J. Chapter 11 and 12 in *Freedom from the Known* (New York: Harper and Row, 1969), online version (<http://www.jkrishnamurti.org/krishnamurti-teachings/view-text.php?tid=48&chid=56794&w=&>)

Malerba, Luigi. "Consuming the View," in *Italian Tales An Anthology of Contemporary Italian Fiction*, ed Massimo Riva (New Haven, CT: Yale Press, 2004), 5-7.

Modrak, Rebekah, and Bill Anthes. *Reframing Photography: Theory and Practice*. London: Routledge, 2011, Chapters 1, 2 and 4.

Sontag, Susan. "In Plato's Cave" and "The Image-World," in *On Photography* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1977).

Videography

As films/videos are screened in class, a videography list will be updated in Moodle on a weekly basis. This list should be used to for reference proposes for your "Response Texts."