

CMS/DMA 387, EXPANDED CINEMA, SPRING 2017

John Cabot University

Period: Monday 3:30–6:15 PM

Room: Digital Media Lab-Guarini Campus, Kushlan Wing, Ground Floor, Room 2

Instructor: Marco G. Ferrari, mferrari@johncabot.edu

Office hours by appointment

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Though often overlooked, the act of projection is at the heart of cinema (the act or process of causing a picture to appear on a surface). This studio course focuses on the creation of moving image based work, exploring how time and space are used as materials to create form and inspire content within the contemporary film genre known as expanded cinema. The technical, historical and psychological aspects of the projected image will be studied in order to re-think cinema as a group and investigate how the projected image can find meaning outside the black box of theaters or the white cube of galleries. Two personal experimental video projects will lead to a final group video installation that will use the environment within the vicinity of John Cabot University's campus (Trastevere neighborhood) to inspire your works while also become the location of the final outdoor projection event.

COURSE OVERVIEW

This course focuses on the history, theory and production of an exciting contemporary art form known as expanded cinema, which encompasses cinema, visual, sound and performance based arts. Linked to other branches of cinema such as counter cinema, video art and experimental film, expanded cinema is rooted in the origins of film, exploring the act of projection (the process of causing a picture to appear on a surface). It later developed as a branch of cinema in the 1960s upholding the idea of revealing and breaking conventions through modes of production and spectatorship. Yet as technology has evolved, its practice has increasingly become a popular vehicle of expression for artists, often entering popular culture through art galleries, museums, TV, film and commercial entertainment. Today expanded cinema stands at the intersection between cinema and art, image and object, underground and mainstream.

A cinema of thought that is constantly questioning itself, the practice and study of expanded cinema can facilitate an awareness of the interaction between maker and viewer, image and environment, self and otherness. Through fundamental technical exercises in looking, listening and making—connecting the moving image craft to experimental, documentary, fine art, and narrative genres, students will study and create moving image based work, exploring how time and space are used as materials to create form and inspire content in film.

Readings, screenings, discussions, artists' talks, excursions, technical exercises, written response texts and most importantly the creation of two personal works are key components of the class that will lead to a final group outdoor video projection project within the vicinity of John Cabot University's campus. Digital sound recording, image capturing, available lighting, editing, writing and 16mm film will be explored in order to re-think cinema as a class and investigate how the projected image can generate meaning inside and outside the black box of theaters or the white cube of galleries.

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

GOALS

- To introduce the history of cinema, visual, sound and performance based arts through focusing on key developments in expanded cinema from its origins to the present.
- To strengthen the student's ability to develop a visual language using space and time as key materials in creative works.
- To gain greater technical and critiquing skills related to the production and exhibition of moving image based works.

CLASS STRUCTURE

- Discussions based off of assigned readings and viewings and in-class film screenings.
- Conceptual and technical demonstrations.
- Studio time (planning and production).
- Presentation of works (critiques).

READINGS

All required readings are posted on **Moodle** along with auxiliary readings and points of reference that can help further understanding. The 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.

Since **Moodle** is not integrated with the school database, and with the class roster, you will have to create your own account, if you do not have already one. Once you have an account, you will have to enroll in this course by using the enrollment key (noted below).

<http://moodle.johncabot.edu/>

Course Enrollment Key: ExpandedCinema17

Course Reserves at Frohring Library (for Reference):

- Connolly, Maeve. *The Place of Artists' Cinema: Space, Site, and Screen*. Bristol, UK: Intellect Ltd, 2009. *ebook
- Leighton, Tanya, ed. *Art and the Moving Image: A Critical Reader*. London: Tate Publishing, 2008.
- Mondloch, Kate. *Screens: Viewing Media Installation Art*. Electronic mediations, v. 30; Electronic mediations, v. 30. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2010. *ebook
- Rush, Michael. *Video Art*. Rev. ed. New York: Thames & Hudson, 2007.

VIEWINGS

Each class will have a time where we will view screenings of works. A Viewing List (with links when possible) will be available on Moodle and updated on a weekly basis.

PROJECTS

VIDEOS

Due to the course structure, the nature of the creative process and technical aspects connected with each project, students are required to work projects in and out of class. This includes allowing ample time to plan, record and edit. The key aspects of video-making to be studied in this course have been divided into four modules: planning, filming, editing and presenting. Students will follow this cycle of production for the three projects, building upon what was learned from preceding projects.

Project I) Sculpting Place—Sound (2 min video)

Project II) Cine-Roman—Sound + Still Image (2 min video)

*Project III) Expanded Cinema—Outdoor Video Projection/Installation (2-4 min looped video)

*After site visits and research, as a class we will choose the video projection location keeping in consideration key logistical, conceptual and legal concerns. Student's individual video projects, that will in turn be connected to the location site via inspiration or recorded material, will be screened in succession creating a group video installation that will then run as a loop for the duration of the evening projection event. Elements such as site design, logistics, promotion and community involvement will be part of the entire class' responsibility. Individual tasks will be worked through during the planning process.

WRITINGS

Each project will be accompanied by a "Proposal" outlining the student's initial idea. A more thorough paper, "Response Text," will follow each project that will reference the theoretical 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, planning and then evaluating one's own expression in relation to the course material will help to highlight certain forms that took place during the creative process. Planning and reflecting on your own work is not an easy exercise, but through repetition, tendencies and themes will come to the surface that can help inform the following project. Additional short writing prompts may be assigned for each project.

EVALUATION

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 as well. 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.

*Late Assignments will affect your grade.

- 1) General class preparation, including active participation in class discussions and three written "Peer Critiques" (20%)
- 2) Three creative projects (20% each = 60%)
- 3) Three "Proposals" and "Response Texts" (20%)

Written feedback will be given for each project and an individual meeting at the mid-way point of the semester will be arranged to go over the student's current status and any concerns.

Criteria for final grades

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

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

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

D = Well below average of the above

F = Unsatisfactory work, participation, and attendance

ATTENDANCE

Students must attend the first two classes to be eligible to take the course and regular attendance is required. Three late arrivals (more than 10 minutes) are counted as one unexcused absence. Two unexcused absences will result in a full letter drop in the final grade and **three unexcused absences** will result in failure. Due to the once a week meeting schedule for the course, missing one class can mean missing out on a major technical or conceptual lesson plan, which can affect the quality of your projects. In the case of excused absences due to documented illness or family emergencies, please present a dean's note as soon as possible.

OUT OF POCKET MATERIALS

Students enrolled in this course must provide their own external hard drive (250-500GB) to store and archive captured material and video projects.

EQUIPMENT

Different digital recording equipment will be used for each project and these will be available from the **Digital Media Lab**. You all have access to the digital equipment JCU has on reserve for the course and are expected to use these different types of gear to broaden your skill levels. If you have your own recording device that you like to work with (i.e. phone or DSLR) it may work for one the projects and we can discuss this individually.

You will be reserving and checking out the equipment from **Professor Brian Thomson, Coordinator of the Digital Media Lab**. When contacting him to reserve or inquire about equipment, in the subject field please write:

Student Equipment Reservation-Your Name- CMS/DMA 387

Email: brthomson@johncabot.edu

*Please allow him a two-day response time to respond to your inquiries and please let me know ASAP if you have any issues with checking out equipment or something occurs while in production. Accidents happen and technology often fails, so it is best to address the problem as soon as possible.

OFFICE HOURS

On Mondays and Tuesdays I will be available to discuss any concerns or questions outside of class time. Please do not hesitate to email me to schedule a time.

SCHEDULE

WEEK 1

Monday January 16

- 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
- Studio: Project I Assignment: Sculpting Place—Sound (2 min)

Due 1/23/17

Readings:

- "Chapter 1" of Thompson, Kristin, and David Bordwell. *Film History: An Introduction*. Boston: McGraw-Hill, 2003.
- "Introduction" of Rush, Michael. 2007. *Video Art*. Rev. ed. New York: Thames & Hud.
- "Chapter 1" of Altman, Rick. *Sound Theory, Sound Practice*. New York: Routledge, 1992.

Assignment:

- Project I Proposal

WEEK 2

Monday January 23

- Discussion on Readings
- Lecture: Cinema: from Projection to Conception (1900s–60s)
- Viewings: TBD
- Studio: Sound Editing Basics; In-class Assignment; Project I Proposals Review

Due 1/30/17

Readings:

- "Chapter 11: Looking and Seeing" of Krishnamurti, J. *Freedom from the Known*. 1969.
- "Chapter 1: Shaping a History" of Rush, Michael. 2007. *Video Art*. Rev. ed. New York: Thames & Hud.
- Auxiliary: "Chapter 7: Sound in the Cinema" of Bordwell, David, and Kristin Thompson. *Film Art: An Introduction*. New York: The McGraw-Hill Companies, 1997.

Assignment:

- Project I: Sound Recordings

WEEK 3

Monday January 30

- Discussion on Readings
- Lecture: History/Theory: Cinema: Video Art to Installation (1970s–2000s)
- Viewings: TBD
- Studio: Sound Editing (continued)

Due 2/6/17

Readings:

- "Chapter 12: Observer and Observed" of Krishnamurti, J. *Freedom from the Known*. 1969.
- "Chapter 2: Video and the Conceptual Body" of Rush, Michael. 2007. *Video Art*.

Rev. ed. New York: Thames & Hud.

Assignment:

- Project I: Continue to record if needed and/or edit.

WEEK 4

Monday February 6

- Discussion on Readings
- Studio: Sound Editing (finalizing and exporting project)
- Project II Assignment Given: Cine-Roman—Sound + Still Image
- Viewings: Chris Marker, *La Jetée*, 28 minutes, 1962; and other photographers/artists

Due 2/13/17

Readings:

- Astruc, Alexandre. "The Birth of a New Avant-Garde: La Camera-Stylo." *L'Écran Française* (1948)
- "Chapter 3: Video and the New Narrative" of Rush, Michael. 2007. *Video Art*. Rev. ed. New York: Thames & Hud.
- "In Plato's Cave" in Sontag, Susan. *On Photography*. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1977.

Assignment:

- Project I: Continue to record if needed and edit.

Friday February 10 (make-up day for holiday on April 17)

- Museum or Gallery visit: Place TBD

WEEK 5

Monday February 13

- *Student Presentation: Project I) Sculpting Place—Sound (2 min)*
- Discussion on Readings
- Lecture: History/Theory: Contemporary Photography
- Studio: Project II Pre-Production

Due 2/20/17

Readings:

- "Chapter 4: Extensions" of Rush, Michael. 2007. *Video Art*. Rev. ed. New York: Thames & Hud.
- "The Image-World" Sontag, Susan. *On Photography*. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1977.

Assignment:

- Project II Proposal
- Museum/Gallery Visit Review

WEEK 6

Monday February 20

- Discussion on Readings
- Proposal Review
- Viewings: TBD
- Studio: Camera Composition (framing and perspective)

Due 2/27/17

Readings:

- "The Ontology of the Photographic Image" in Bazin, André, and Hugh Gray. *What Is Cinema?* Berkeley: University of California Press, 1967.
- Daren, Maya. "Tempo and Tension." *The Movies as Medium*. By Lewis Jacobs. New York: Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 1970.
- "The Cinematographic Principle and the Ideogram" in Eisenstein, Sergei, and Jay Leyda. *Film Form; Essays in Film Theory*. New York: Harcourt, Brace, 1949.

Assignment:

- Project II: Initial Material

WEEK 7

Monday February 27

- Discussion on Readings
- Studio: Project II Image Editing—Color Correction, Cuts, Superimposition, Timing
- Viewings: TBD

Due 3/6/17

Readings:

- Sterling, Bruce. "Vernacular Video." (2007).
- Steyerl, Hito. "In Defense of the Poor Image." *E-flux* 10 (2010).

Assignment:

- Project II: Continue to record if needed and edit.

WEEK 8

Monday March 6

- Discussion on Readings
- Studio: Project II Editing and Exporting
- Midway Student Meetings

Due 3/13/17

Readings:

- "Leaving the Movie Theater" in Barthes, Roland. *The Rustle of Language*. New York: Hill and Wang, 1986.
- Bunuel, Luis. "Cinema, Instrument of Poetry." In *The Shadow and Its Shadow: Surrealist Writings on the Cinema*. By Paul Hammond. Edinburgh: Polygon, 1991.

Assignment:

- Project II: Video and Response Text Due

WEEK 9

Monday March 13

- Discussion on Readings
 - *Student Presentation: Project II) Cine-Roman—Sound + Still Image (2 min)*
 - Project III Assignment Given: Expanded Cinema—Outdoor Video
- Projection/Installation
- Studio: Advanced Camera Composition—mis-en-scene, movement, and performance

Due 3/20/17

Readings:

- "The Power of Film" & "Vision and the Screen" in McGinn, Colin. *The Power of Movies: How Screen and Mind Interact*. New York: Pantheon Books, 2005.

Assignment:

- Project III: Proposals

WEEK 10

Monday March 20

- Lecture: History/Theory; Camera Obscura—The Psychology of Projection, archetypes and the use of archetypes in compositions.
- Discussion on Readings
- Studio: Project III—Proposal Review and Development

Due 3/27/17

Readings:

- Espinosa, Julio Garcia. "For an Imperfect Cinema." *The Cuba Reader* (2009): 458-65.
- Kotz, Liz. "The Space Between Screens." *Art and the Moving Image: A Critical Reader*. By Tanya Leighton. London: Tate Pub, 2008.

Assignment:

- Project III: Research/Gather/Record Material

WEEK 11

Monday March 27

- Project III: Projection Location Site Visits & Community Outreach Strategies
- Lecture: History/Theory; Video as sculpture or performance?
- Discussion on Readings
- Studio: Video Projection Basics, Digital vs. Analog; Project III Editing—Deconstructing the frame

Due Monday April 10 (week 13)

Readings

- Deren, Maya. "Cinematography: The Creative Use of Reality." *Daedalus* 89, no. 1 (1960): 150-67.
- Walley, Jonathan. "Modes of Film Practice in the Avant Garde." *Art and the Moving Image: A Critical Reader*. By Tanya Leighton. London: Tate Pub, 2008.
- Lazzarato, Maurizio. "Video Flows and Real Time." *Art and the Moving Image: A Critical Reader*. By Tanya Leighton. London: Tate Pub, 2008.

Assignment:

- Project III: Record/Gather Material and Editing

WEEK 12

Monday April 3

- *No Class, Spring Break.*

WEEK 13

Monday April 10

- Discussion on Readings
- Lecture: History/Theory: Curating and Social Art Practice
- Studio: Project III Editing & Projecting Tests; Preparation & Promotion.

Due Monday April 24 (week 15)

Readings:

- "Letter to Massimo on Beauty" & "Letter to Giorgio on the Sublime" in Negri, Antonio. *Art and multitude: nine letters on art, followed by Metamorphoses: art and immaterial labour*. Cambridge: Polity, 2011.
- Pages 246-48 in Trungpa, Chögyam, and John Baker. *Cutting Through Spiritual*

Materialism. Berkeley: Shambhala, 1973.

WEEK 14

Monday April 17

- *No Class, make-up day Friday February 10.*

WEEK 15

Monday April 24

- Discussion on Readings

- Studio: Project III Final Editing, Installation Tests, Tweaks, Preparation, Promotion.

WEEK 16

Monday May 1: *Response text due*

May 1–5, Place & Time TBD: *Evening Presentation: Project III) Expanded Cinema
Projection/Installation Event (2-4 min. each)*

FINE

Bibliography

- Astruc, Alexandre. "The Birth of a New Avant-Garde: La Camera-Stylo." *L'Écran Française* (1948)
- Altman, Rick. *Sound Theory, Sound Practice*. New York: Routledge, 1992.
- Barthes, Roland. *The Rustle of Language*. New York: Hill and Wang, 1986.
- Bazin, André, and Hugh Gray. *What Is Cinema?* Berkeley: University of California Press, 1967.
- Bunuel, Luis. "Cinema, Instrument of Poetry." In *The Shadow and Its Shadow: Surrealist Writings on the Cinema*. By Paul Hammond. Edinburgh: Polygon, 1991.
- Deren, Maya. "Cinematography: The Creative Use of Reality." *Daedalus* 89, no. 1 (1960): 150-67.
- Daren, Maya. "Tempo and Tension." *The Movies as Medium*. By Lewis Jacobs. New York: Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 1970.
- Eisenstein, Sergei, and Jay Leyda. *Film Form; Essays in Film Theory*. New York: Harcourt, Brace, 1949.
- Espinosa, Julio Garcia. "For an Imperfect Cinema." *The Cuba Reader* (2009): 458-65.
- Krishnamurti, J. *Freedom from the Known*. 1969.
- *- Leighton, Tanya. *Art and the Moving Image: A Critical Reader*. London: Tate Pub, 2008.
- 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.
- McGinn, Colin. *The Power of Movies: How Screen and Mind Interact*. New York: Pantheon Books, 2005.
- Negri, Antonio. *Art and multitude: nine letters on art, followed by Metamorphoses: art and immaterial labour*. Cambridge: Polity, 2011.
- Sontag, Susan. *On Photography*. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1977.
- *Rush, Michael. 2007. *Video Art*. Rev. ed. New York: Thames & Hud.
- Sterling, Bruce. "Vernacular Video." (2007).
- Steyerl, Hito. "In Defense of the Poor Image." *E-flux* 10 (2010).
- Thompson, Kristin, and David Bordwell. *Film History: An Introduction*. Boston: McGraw-Hill, 2003.
- Trungpa, Chögyam, and John Baker. *Cutting Through Spiritual Materialism*. Berkeley: Shambhala, 1973.
- *On reserve, Frohring Library

Additional books on reserve, Frohring Library

- Connolly, Maeve. 2009. *The Place of Artists' Cinema: Space, Site and Screen*.
- Mondloch, Kate. 2010. *Screens: Viewing Media Installation Art*. Electronic mediations, v. 30; Electronic mediations, v. 30. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

<https://jculibrary.on.worldcat.org/courseReserves/course/id/11391623>

Filmography

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."