

Welcome To PhotoArts 6 **2067-253-12**

Suzanne Szucs – Instructor

Lecture M/W 10-11:50pm room 7B – 3105
LAB T 1-4:50pm room 7B-4090

sespph@rit.edu **phone 475-2741**
Office: 7B-2200
hours: TBA or by appt.

What would you photograph if you could do anything? What barriers are there to getting at what you want? How do you manage time, materials and form with your ability to communicate your ideas?

With this class you are beginning your journey into your area of specialization. Our goal is to explore multiple approaches to the subject in order to consider how those approaches alter what we communicate through the connection between form and content. You will be expected to communicate your ideas visually through the investigation of the **technical**, **aesthetic** and **conceptual** aspects of photographic practice as well as creating a project proposal and writing about your work. Lectures, readings, discussions and a student presentation will support assignments.

Basic premise of the class:

Students will work on subject matter of their own choosing throughout the course of the quarter. The first six weeks of the quarter, students will investigate that subject matter through various approaches. The last month of the quarter will be devoted to re-evaluation of the subject through their area of interest (PJ, Fine Art, Ad...) with the objective being to create a portfolio of images relevant to the area they will be entering. Students will submit a proposal including time and materials management that will support their completion of the project.

Now for the nitty gritty... A syllabus is a contract for the course – please read below carefully:

Attendance: This class meets 3 times a week and you are expected to be in attendance and on time for every class. Excessive absences or lateness will result in a lowered grade. I deeply respect those who take responsibility for themselves – you know where you need to be, be there – you are paying for it, take advantage of class and lab time. If you have other priorities, take responsibility and own up to it. An excused absence will only be given with a doctor's note, funeral program and preferably before the fact (email me, email me, email me...). Excused absences do not include being in jail or on vacation. **Please note that YOU are responsible for getting yourself caught up in any area you miss – demos and tests will not be rescheduled.**

Conduct: We're all adults here so this is a place where we play nice. Respecting the other students as well as the instructor are crucial to creating a safe and enjoyable learning environment. Unless you happen to be a doctor on call, **Cell phones, computers and electronic devices are to be turned off for the duration of class.** Paying attention, asking questions and contributing to discussions are very important. Your participation will be considered in your final grade. If you feel that you are being mistreated by any person in class, or you think that I am treating you unfairly, please see me immediately. I have an open door policy however there will always be misunderstandings between individuals and we absolutely want to make sure that any discomfort or disagreements are handled immediately. RIT has many resources if you are having problems and this institution supports an environment free of discrimination. With that said, it is important to remember that we all have differing opinions and our classroom will be a safe forum to express them. Be prepared to hear ideas or opinions that may not fall in line with your own; to respect what others have to say and to feel comfortable expressing your own thoughts.

- ☞ If you have a disability, it is your responsibility to bring the proper documentation to my attention if you desire accommodation during class.
- ☞ I often show "difficult" imagery that may include sexually explicit nudes or images of violence. Please see me privately if this will be an issue for you and we will attempt to make accommodation.

It is our desire that we have an open and creative environment for our class, however the following conduct is not acceptable:

- ☞ Talking during lecture – please ask questions, however;
- ☞ Loud or disruptive behavior, disrespect to other students or the instructor;
- ☞ Sleeping;
- ☞ No eating, ever, in the LAB – I usually allow it in class if it is not disruptive;
- ☞ Sexual intimidation or harassment;
- ☞ Cheating or plagiarism;
- ☞ Cell phones, computers, text messaging during lectures/discussions, during formal lab time.

What you can expect of me: I am your leader and facilitator. You can expect a consistent level of passion about art and education. I am your biggest cheerleader and your toughest critic. It is my job to push you to do your best, to always do better. It is not important whether I like your work, so don't spend your time trying to please me. What is important is that you push yourself to discover your own vision and to develop the skills necessary to make the best, most communicative images within your ability. I don't believe in right answers – there are many ways to solve a problem. I don't pretend to have all the answers, but I do have a lot of experience and enthusiasm to help you get answers. I do believe in the adventure of endless learning – that's why I teach. My door is always open. I expect you to try your best and you can expect the same from me.

Grades: I am considered to be a hard grader, so if you want an A in this class, be prepared to work hard for it! “A” means consistently exceptional work, that means not just fulfilling the assignments, but really investigating your ideas, consistently trying new things and pushing yourself to work harder. On the other hand, working hard does not guarantee you an A grade. Excelling means putting it all together – technical, aesthetic and conceptual – regardless of what area you plan on concentrating in the future.

A = Excellent – you have gone well beyond the requirements of the assignment, making work that is challenging both technically and aesthetically, excellent participant in critique. Work shows exceptional creative thought.

B = Above average – you've gone beyond the requirements of the assignment, made work that is challenging either technically or aesthetically, and have been an excellent participant in crits.

C = Average – you've fulfilled the requirements of the assignment and made good work. You moderately participated in the critique.

D = Below Average – did not completely fulfill the requirements of the assignment, made work that was either technically or aesthetically inferior, moderate to poor performance in crit.

F = Failing – did not turn in work; work did not fulfill the requirements of the course.

- ☞ Your final grade will be comprised of **Assignments, Participation in discussions and crits, Student Presentation and Final Portfolio**. There should be plenty of opportunity for you to excel in all areas. If you are having problems in any area, or are unclear about why you received a certain grade, be sure to come see me asap so that we can get on top of the problem immediately.
- ☞ **In relationship to assignments, this is a self-directed course – You will choose your subject. You absolutely need to be able to manage time, to maintain interest in your subject matter and to work on long term assignments.**

Critique: One of the most important aspects of this class is the critique process. Nearly every week we will discuss each other's work. You are expected to not only be gracious in hearing critique of your work, but to also provide compelling and consistent feedback on your fellow students' work. The more you share, the more you will learn. It is important to remember that we are all in this together. It is also important to put your personal feelings aside. Critique can be difficult to hear, but this is exactly what makes us better image-makers. When offering critique, try to remember that it is not about you – it is about the work on the wall. Be honest and look for both the successes and failures. In receiving criticism, remember that we learn most through our failures, accept that criticism is about the work and not about you.

For all assignments I expect you to turn in:

- ☞ prints,
- ☞ contact sheets and
- ☞ a typed project self-evaluation.
- ☞ Put your work in a brown folder with your name & email on it. Have at least two of these folders as you may not always get your work back the following week.
- ☞ Part of your evaluation will be the presentation of your work so make it clean and neat!
- ☞ Assignments have one due date – work not turned in on the due date will receive an F.
- ☞ Extensions on projects will be given **only if application is made ahead of time and for a justifiable reason.** See attendance above. Partial work is better than no work, however missing class does not extend a due date!

Reading/discussions: You are expected to be an active participant in all class discussions. Come prepared with your thoughts and ideas to contribute. This will form part of your grade. It's an opportunity to practice your public personal skills which will be so needed in your career! You will have several reading response writing assignments that are intended to help you think about photography in a social/historical context. These are due at the time of the discussion and will form a basis for our discussions.

- ☞ **Please purchase *The Photography Reader* by Liz Wells** – available in the bookstore – feel free to read beyond what is assigned and to share the text with a classmate.
- ☞ Additional readings will be made available through mycourses

Presentation: You'll also give a presentation that will explore your work within the context of your chosen area of study. You'll explore the history of your area, present and evaluate the work of at least 3 artists/image makers of influence to you and conjecture on where your own work fits within the genre. Presentations will be given week 8 & 9 by lottery, accompanied by a 3 page paper.

Materials – better known as “What, I’ve got to buy all this stuff?!”

- ☞ As you can expect, materials will vary with the class. You will have a lot of flexibility in how you choose to complete your projects.
- ☞ All projects will be expected to be realized in hard copy for critique.
- ☞ Final portfolios will be finished and presented in a professional manner, accompanied by a statement about the work (which includes a rationalization for the area of interest), as well as a CDR with a digital portfolio.

Text books: you should have these:

- ☞ *Photography, 9th edition*, by London, Upton & Stone (you'll use this as a resource throughout your foundation years at RIT, so cough up for it!)
- ☞ *Using the View Camera* by Jim Stone
- ☞ *Photographic Lighting* by John Childs
- ☞ Recommended: *Photoshop CS3 for Photographers* by Martin Evening or *Real World Adobe Photoshop* by Blatner & Fraser

PA6 Schedule
Spring Quarter 2008

Suz Szucs – Instructor

Subject to revision as necessary

Week 1

- 3/10** Intro to class, introduction of Assignment #1 – Subject as Document
Readings for 3/12 – *Photography Reader*:
- ☞ Wright Morris: *In Our Image*;
 - ☞ Documentary Intro pgs 252-256
 - ☞ Martha Rosler: *In, Around, and Afterthoughts...*
- 3/11** **LAB** Demo on scanners as necessary, overview of digital procedures/workflow, review of previous work.
ESP lab
- 3/12** Lecture: Documentary/Street photography, respond to readings
-

Week 2

- 3/17** **Guest lecturer**
Readings for 3/19 - 31 – *Photography Reader*:
- ☞ Victor Burgin: *Looking at Photographs*
 - ☞ Edmundo Desnoes: *Cuba Made Me So*
 - ☞ Jan Avgikos: *Cindy Sherman: Burning Down the House*
- 3/18** **K Lab – digital printing techniques; open lab**
- 3/19** A2 – Subject in the studio, due 4/7 lecture: Fashion to Fine Art
Discussion of readings
-

Week 3

- 3/24** Crit assignment #1
- 3/25** **LAB** – demo on medium format systems
- 3/26** Crit assignment #1
-

Week 4

- 3/31** Discuss readings
Readings for 4/2 - 14 – *Photography Reader*:
- ☞ Ossip Brik: *What the Eye Does not See*
 - ☞ Edward Weston: *Seeing Photographically*
 - ☞ Roberta McGrath: *Re-reading Edward Weston*

4/1 **Open Lab – TBA**

4/2 A3 – Landscape/Cityscape, due 4/21

Lecture: large format as way of seeing, discuss readings

Week 5

4/7 Crit assignment #2

4/8 **LAB** – demo on portable light kits, large format review if necessary

4/9 Crit assignment #2

Week 6

4/14 Lecture: Fine Art as Encompassing, Content & Form
discuss readings

Readings for 4/16 – *Photography Reader*:

☞ John Berger: *Photographs of Agony*

☞ bell hooks: *In our Glory: Photography and Black Life*

4/15 **1st draft of proposal for final portfolio due – midterm meetings**

4/16 George Eastman House visit

Week 7

4/21 Crit assignment #3

4/22 **Open Lab – TBA**

4/23 Crit assignment #3

Final Portfolio Proposal due

Week 8

4/28 **Student Presentations**

4/29 **Open Lab – TBA**

4/30 **Student Presentations**

Week 9

5/5 **Student Presentations**

5/6 Group work in progress crit (graded)

5/7 Student Presentations

Week 10

5/12 Individual Meetings

5/13 Open Lab

5/14 Individual Meetings

Finals Week – Critique – TBA