



Lucy Orta, *Nexus Architecture X 50 Intervention Koln*, 2001.

## **ARTISTS AS ORGANIZERS**

### **Sculp 2900 - 001 Sophomore Seminar: Interdisciplinary**

School of the Art Institute of Chicago  
Spring 2019, Tuesday 1:00 - 4:00 PM  
Columbus Drive Building, Room 032  
Kevin Kaempf, Instructor

### **Course Description**

What are the concerns that drive your creative practice? How do you set the terms for your future development? This course offers intensive faculty mentoring as well as interdisciplinary strategies for the evaluation and communication of students' individual practice as artists, designers, and scholars. Through essential readings, studio projects, and writing, students will generate narratives about how and why they make art.

Interdisciplinary Sophomore Studio Seminar is focused on mentoring by SAIC core faculty, student portfolio development, visualizing a future curricular pathway, and expanding critique skills. The overall goal of sophomore seminar is to provide intensive faculty mentoring for designing unique curricular plans for each student, foregrounding immediate creative goals and long-term career aspirations. Peer mentoring actively employed to increase the quality and originality of each student's personal portfolio work.

### **Artists as Organizers**

Artists' training in observation, research, and communication provides unique skills to critically untangle complex relationships and navigate complicated structures. This ability enables the creation of meaning through reorganizing and reimagining space, objects, cultural codes and signifiers, language, relationships, and systems.

This section of Sophomore Seminar explores contemporary art making strategies that solicit active participation from the viewer. In a workshop setting, students will leverage and develop their creative skills, focusing on personal and professional growth.

Coursework will emphasize writing and critique while exploring our unique role as creators of shared culture. Generative techniques (language based and visual) will explore and chart students' unique interests in relation to culture and society. Together we will mine the collective and diverse perspectives of the class to inform our discussions and critiques.

### **Selected Readings**

1. Cocker, Emma. "Tactics for Not Knowing: Preparing for the Unexpected." *On Not Knowing - How Artists Think*, eds. Rebecca Fortnum and Elizabeth Fisher, (Black Dog Publishing, 2013). pp. 126 – 135.
2. Buster, Kendall and Paula Crawford. "Critique Dynamics." *The Critique Handbook: The Art Student's Sourcebook and Survival Guide (2nd Edition)*. Upper Saddle River: Pearson, 2009. p. 87 - 111.
3. Fusco, Coco. "Debating an MFA? The Lowdown on Art School Risks and Returns." Huffington Post December 4, 2013.
4. Sanders, Jay with Anderson, Laurie. "The Artist as Media." *Art in America*. November 2013. Reprint of Craig Owens essay "Amplifications: Laurie Anderson" from *Art in American*, March 1981.
5. Solnit, Rebecca. "The Archipelago of Arrogance." *TomDispatch.com*. August 19, 2012. Republished post of the essay "Men Explain Things to Me: Facts Didn't Get in Their Way" with a new introduction by the author.
6. Tokumitsu, Miya. "In the Name of Love." *Jacobin* January 2014, Issue 13.

### **Selected Assignments and Activities**

- **Presentation 1 - Under the Influence (10 influences in 10 minutes)**: Brief descriptions of your top 10 influences in art, in life, in culture. What do they do? How do they do it? Each influence in 1 image and 1 minute. Go!
- **Critiques** - There will be three critiques during the semester. Each critique will explore a different format (casual conversation, formal presentation, and a self-directed/designed critique). The work presented for critiques may be from previous semesters or studio classes you are taking now. Students are encouraged to present works in progress. In addition to presenting the work, significant preparation establishing context for one's work will be required for critiques.
- **Presentation 2 - Documentation of Iterative Practice**: Documentation of a selection of work contextualized with supporting writing and documents demonstrating your creative process.
- **Writing Assignment 1 - Under the Influence (10 influences)**: Narrative version of your 10-minute presentation.
- **Writing Assignment 2 - Manifesto**: Write a short manifesto - about art, about culture, about politics, about lunch. Stand for something.
- **Writing Assignment 3 - Critical Response**: Write a short critical response to the content and/or issues raised by the work of one of the artists or exhibitions visited during our gallery visits.

- **Paper 1 - Curricular Mapping:** Write an essay for your fellow students and faculty mentor that describes who you are and where you are going as a creative person. The purpose of this assignment is to create a convincing argument of how future SAIC classes might support your long-term career or creative goals.
- **Paper 2 - Self-Assessment Evaluation:** While reflecting on your experience in Sophomore Seminar, write a narrative reaction to your self-identified strengths and areas of possible growth. Students will also articulate an assessment of the tools, time, and space needed to best support the development of their individual creative practices.