

George Mason University School of Art
Fall 2017 / AVT 252 – Darkroom Photography
Class meets Tuesdays/Thursdays 1:30-4:10pm

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Office hours: by appointment, Tuesdays/Thursdays from noon to 1:15pm

Syllabus, course content, and schedule are subject to change

Course Description

Introduction to basic technical and aesthetic principles of black and white photography, from learning how to operate 35mm film to processing and developing film, and printing both in the darkroom and digitally.

How can we use photography to describe a personal vision? In this class, we will investigate and shape our individual ways of seeing through what we choose to include (and exclude) within a frame. Through photographing weekly, in class demonstrations, slide lectures, and critique, students will engage in the problems of photographic production and seeing.

This class will focus on technical and aesthetic issues of developing 35mm black and white negatives and printing in the darkroom. Students will read, discuss, and look at work by Diane Arbus, Lee Friedlander, Garry Winogrand, Robert Frank, Henri Cartier Bresson, John Gossage, and Thomas Roma, among others. Students will also read and discuss the writings of John Szarkowski, Walker Evans, Susan Sontag, and Tod Papageorge. This course requires students to expose at least twenty (20) rolls of 35mm black and white film, process negatives, print in the darkroom, and discuss their work and the work of their peers. Students will leave this course with a technical understanding of film exposure, advanced darkroom printing techniques, and an in-progress body of photographic work.

Additional note: readings are posted to the blackboard (except for textbook readings). General communications and announcements are made via email. Write by email with any questions. I usually respond within the hour, except for Tuesday and Thursday afternoons when I am on campus.

Mason Core Requirement

This class fulfills a Mason Core requirement for Arts. Arts goal: Courses aim to achieve a majority of the following learning outcomes: students will be able to identify and analyze the formal elements of a particular art form using vocabulary appropriate to that form; demonstrate an understanding of the relationship between artistic technique and the expression of a work's underlying concept; analyze cultural productions using standards appropriate to the form and cultural context; analyze and interpret material or

performance culture in its social, historical, and personal contexts; and engage in the artistic process, including conception, creation, and ongoing critical analysis.

Goals

- To expose, develop, and print black and white film
- To learn and retain a technical skill set that includes:
 - o Loading film in a 100% dark room
 - o Negative development using developer, stop, fix, and fixer remover chemicals
 - o Mix chemicals to develop film
 - o Use filters to control contrast when printing
 - o Printing with two filters on one piece of light sensitive paper
 - o Understand the difference between resin-coated paper and fiber paper
 - o Make contact sheets
 - o Isolate and adjust areas that need to be brightened or darkened in a print
 - o Enlarge negatives to an 8x10 inch print
 - o Mounting finished prints on to board
- To have a thorough understanding and command of camera exposure: aperture, shutter, ISO and how these elements affect photographic description
- To assert control over and have a working understanding of photographic description through depth of field, shutter speed, grain, and lens choices
- To establish a working process in the darkroom
- To find and establish a personal photographic vision through producing and editing new pictures
- To produce and print at least four (4) new 8x10 inch prints weekly for critique
- To verbally articulate how and why visual information affects you in your own work and the work of others

Grading

Grades in this course are by participation, attendance, and assignments. You will earn and lose points in the following scenarios:

- If you attend class you receive **+100 points** per meeting
- If you are absent from regular class for any reason you receive **0 points**
- If you attend critique and show 4 prints you receive **+150 points**
- If you attend critique but do not show prints you receive **+50 points**
- If you do not show prints one week (present or absent) then the following week present at least 8 prints (4 prints for the crit you missed AND 4 additional prints for the current crit) you receive **+250 points**
- If you are absent and/or do not show new work for two rounds of critique in *any* order you receive **-200 points**
 - o If you miss and/or do not show new work in any order for a third time **-100 points** per critique (example: -200 for the two missed crits, then -100 for the third missed crit = -300 total points)
- Each quiz is worth **+100 points**, and contains ten (10) questions each
- If you participate in the final critiques on both days you receive **+500 points**

- If you show new work for your final critique but are absent for the other critique day you receive **+250 points**
- If you are absent for your final critique you receive **-500 points**
- If you are absent for your final critique but attend the other critique day you receive **0 points**

Eighteen (18) regular class meetings: 1800 possible points
(not including crits)

Eight (8) rounds of critique: 1200 possible points
(on Tuesdays, 9/19, 9/26, 10/3, 10/17, 10/24, 10/31, 11/7, 11/21)

Three (3) quizzes: 300 possible points

Two (2) final critique days: 500 possible points

3800 possible points

Grade breakdown:

3650-3800 = A

3450-3600 = A-

3350-3400 = B+

3200-3300 = B

3050-3150 = B-

2950-3000 = C+

2800-2900 = C

2650-2750 = C-

2300-2600 = D

0000-2250 = F

On Critique

Definition - Criticism [krit-uh-siz-uh m]

1. The act of passing judgment as to the merits of anything.
2. The act of passing severe judgment; censure; faultfinding.
3. The act or art of analyzing and evaluating or judging the quality of a literary or artistic work, musical performance, art exhibit, dramatic production, etc.
4. A critical comment, article, or essay; critique
5. Any of various methods of studying texts or documents for the purpose of dating or reconstructing them evaluating their authenticity, analyzing their content or style, etc.

Dictionary.com

Critique in this class will last for 8-10 minutes per student. All students are expected to participate when reviewing the work of his or her peers. In this class, we aim to analyze and read the visual facts contained within each photographic frame. When making comments about photographs, it is important to explain why. Please do not simply state "I like your photographs." Instead, say "I like your photographs because..." When giving negative comments, please suggest solutions. Offer different ways to solve problems occurring in the photographs. The aim of weekly critique is to discuss how we make

pictures, refine our technical choices, and delve deeper into each person's photographic way of seeing.

Weekly review of student work allows each student to clarify their thoughts (visually and verbally) in a predictable forum without surprises. Students learn to control and navigate critique in a formalized structure. Furthermore, it allows for a distinctly privileged discussion among the class where we approach each other's work from a position of knowing and seeing the work develop and change week after week. We are here to talk about, make, and take pictures.

Materials

- Textbook: Henry Horenstein "Black and White Photography: A Basic Manual" 3rd edition, Little Brown and Company (available at GMU bookstore or Amazon)
- 35mm with manual controls and a 50mm lens
- Light meter (internal) or handheld (smart phone apps are OK)
- At least twenty (20) rolls of ISO 400 film: Kodak Tri-X, Kodak T-Max, or Ilford HP5, 36 exposures each (purchase first rolls from Annie in SoA print and more from B&H Photo or Adorama)
- Ilford Multigrade RC paper 8x10 inch glossy (around 50 sheets; you can also buy a pack of 100 and split it with another student)
- Ilford Multigrade Fiber paper 8x10 inch glossy (100 sheets)
- Negative sleeves for 35mm film, 36 exposures
- At least twenty (20) white mounting board 11x14 inches
- At least twenty-five (25) dry mount tissue paper, 8x10 inches
- 3 ring binder
- Scissors
- Canned air
- Anti static cloth
- Smock or old shirt that you can wear while developing film (optional)
- China marker or sharpie (optional)

Resources to Purchase Materials Off Campus

B&H Photo (free 2-day shipping)

www.bhphoto.com

420 9th Avenue, New York

Adorama

www.adorama.com

42 West 18th Street, New York

KEH Camera (for used cameras)

www.keh.com

Dominion Camera
www.dominioncamera.com
112 West Broad Street, Falls Church VA

District Camera
www.districtcamera.com
6025-G Burke Center Parkway, Burke, VA

1225 I Street NW, Washington

ACE Photo
www.acephoto.net
44710 Cape Court, Ashburn, VA

McClanahan
www.mcccamea.com
306 West Lee Highway, Warrenton, VA

Ritz Camera
www.ritzcamera.com
6917 Arlington Road, Bethesda, MD

Nippon Photo Clinic (camera repair)
www.nipponphotoclinic.com
37 West 39th Street, suite 401, New York

Photo Tech Repair Service (camera repair)
www.phototech.com
360 West 36th Street, New York

Pro Photo (camera repair)
www.prophoto-dc.com
2000 Pennsylvania Avenue NW, Washington

Strauss Photo Technical Service (camera repair)
www.straussphototech.com
8504 Dakota Drive, Gaithersburg, MD

Class Schedule

Day 1 – Tuesday 8/29:

Introductions

Review syllabus

Exposure basics: shutter, aperture, ISO

Assignment due on Tuesday 9/5: read chapters 1, 3, 4, 5

Day 2 Thursday 8/31:

Loading film into cameras
Lecture on depth of field and motion
Partner portraits on depth of field and motion
Demo and practice loading film on to reels

Day 3 Tuesday 9/5:

Darkroom tour
Film development demo and exercise (if you have unusable film please re-shoot and develop before class on Thursday)

Assignment due on Thursday 9/7: read chapters 6 and 9

Day 4 Thursday 9/7:

Quiz #1 on aperture, shutter, ISO, depth of field, and motion
Lecture: On Photographic Seeing
Analyzing/troubleshooting film development issues
Contact sheets

Assignment due Tuesday 9/12: read chapter 10

Day 5 Tuesday 9/12:

Demo: Enlargements, filtration
Print in the darkroom as a class
On an individual basis: burning, dodging

Day 6 Thursday 9/14:

Open lab in preparation for critique #1

Day 7 Tuesday 9/19:

Critique #1: at least four (4) 8x10inch fiber-based prints

Read "Windows and Mirrors" essay by Szarkowski for class on 9/21

Day 8 Thursday 9/21:

Quiz #2 on printing
Lecture and discussion: John Szarkowski, Windows & Mirrors
Demo: split filtration
Open lab

Day 9 Tuesday 9/26:

Critique #2: at least four (4) 8x10inch fiber-based prints

Read "Lyric Documentary" lecture by Walker Evans for class on 9/28

Day 10 Thursday 9/28:

Lecture: On Walker Evans, Eugene Atget

Demo: print mounting

Open lab

Day 11 Tuesday 10/3:

Critique #3: at least four (4) 8x10inch fiber-based prints

Read excerpt from "On Photography" by Susan Sontag for class on 10/5

Day 12 Thursday 10/5:

Lecture: On Diane Arbus, Susan Sontag

Open lab

Read essays by Richard Benson and Rod Slemmons on Lee Friedlander for class on 10/10

Day 13 Tuesday 10/10:

No class – Monday classes meet on Tuesday for Columbus Day

Day 14 Thursday 10/12:

Lecture: On Lee Friedlander

Open lab

Day 15 Tuesday 10/17:

Critique #4: at least eight (8) 8x10inch fiber-based prints

Read Gerry Badger essay on Gossage for class on 10/19

Day 16 Thursday 10/19:

Lecture: On John Gossage "The Pond"

Open lab

Midterm grades posted to Patriot Web and will be given in class

Day 17 Tuesday 10/24:

Critique #5: at least four (4) 8x10inch fiber-based prints

Day 18 Thursday 10/26:

Lecture: how to produce a project

Open lab

Assignment (no points): describe your project to me, either by email, or verbally in class

Day 19 Tuesday 10/31:

Critique #6: at least four (4) 8x10inch fiber-based prints

Day 20 Thursday 11/2:

Open lab

By 1:30pm: I must hear from everyone about plans for final projects

Day 21 Tuesday 11/7:

Critique #7: at least four (4) 8x10inch fiber-based prints

Day 22 Thursday 11/9:

Introduction to scanning negatives and prints

Photoshop basics: burning, dodging, spotting

Day 23 Tuesday 11/14:

Scanning/Photoshop continued

Open lab

Day 24 Thursday 11/16:

Quiz #3 on scanning and Photoshop

Open lab

Day 25 Tuesday 11/21:

Critique #8: at least four (4) 8x10 inch fiber-based prints

Day 26 Thursday 11/23:

No class - Thanksgiving

Day 27 Tuesday 11/28:

Optional individual meetings

Open lab

Day 28 Thursday 11/30:

Open lab

Day 29 Tuesday 12/5:

Final critique Group A

Day 30 Thursday 12/7:

Final critique Group B

Final critique groups A and B. Present *at least* twelve (12) perfectly printed 8x10 inch silver gelatin prints on fiber based paper mounted to board. You may present up to five (5) prints previously presented in class. **Submit scans of ALL final prints by 1:30pm on Thursday 12/7 for full credit for final crit.**

Shooting Assignments

Two options: 1) photograph anything you like; your pictures can simply respond to the world around you and/or photograph a series/project of your choosing; 2) complete the following assignments in any order you like

The Decisive Moment

What is Henri Cartier Bresson's "decisive moment"? Research what this is. Respond to the decisive moment by undermining it, finding it, or staging it.

Making versus Taking

You must "make" pictures and "take" pictures. Try and differentiate between the two words and what making and taking can look like as photographs. Think about your process and what the difference is when photographing and seeing the final product.

Love and Hate

Photograph something you love and photograph something you hate. Use the language of photography to suggest or imply love and to also suggest or imply hate. Challenge: photograph something you love and hate.

Staged versus Found

Find a compelling situation (example: dinner party, friends playing in the park, making dinner) and photograph it. Then, in a different situation, attempt to stage that event. Compare and contrast the pictures in critique.

Photograph Someone You Do Not Know Well

Photograph a stranger/someone you do not know very well. Meet them on the street or arrange an appointment.

Photograph Someone You Are Close To

Photograph someone you are close to. Use photographic description to suggest your feelings or your relationship toward or with this person.

Ode To—

Find a photographer whose work you find compelling or inspirational. Produce pictures which trade on the same virtues, either in formal invention and photographic description or in process, as the photographer you have chosen.

Working the Scene

Find a situation you are interested in (example: a party, an outdoor event, etc.) and photograph it from as many different angles as possible: portraits, landscapes, still lives, action shots. Photograph from as many different points of view as possible: close-up, far shot, looking up, looking down.

Every Half an Hour

Expose to at least one frame every half an hour you are awake. The aim of this assignment is to respond to different lighting conditions and to see how film/digital sensors and exposure reacts. In another, perhaps more long-term way, the aim is also to find a type of lighting condition that you prefer to photograph in.

Hard Versus Soft

Produce pictures of the same subject in harsh lighting conditions (hard edged shadows) and also in soft lighting conditions (soft edged shadows or no shadows at all). What is the difference in the pictures? Make pictures in the opposing conditions of similar subject matter and see how it changes the reading of the pictures in critique.

Photograph a Feeling

Photograph something or someone suggesting emotion: melancholy, sentiment, happiness, anger, etc. Use the camera to point to an emotion either implicitly or explicitly. Think about objects as visual metaphors, how light functions, or how an expression on a person's face can suggest an interior feeling.

Compare and Contrast

Find or construct a visual comparison using at least two elements in the frame. Examples: apples and oranges, bike and car, adult and child.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Important University Dates:

Consortium Registration Deadline	TBD
First day of classes ; last day to submit Domicile Reclassification Application; Payment Due Date	August 28
Labor Day, university closed	September 4
Last day to add classes —all individualized section forms due Last day to drop with no tuition penalty	September 5
Last day to drop with a 33% tuition penalty	September 19
Final Drop Deadline (67% tuition penalty)	September 29
Midterm progress reporting period (100-200 level classes)—grades available via Patriot Web	September 25 – October 20
Selective Withdrawal Period (undergraduate students only)	October 2 – October 27
Columbus Day recess (Monday classes/labs meet Tuesday. Tuesday classes do not meet this week)	October 9
Incomplete work from spring/summer 2017 due to instructor	October 27
Incomplete grade changes from spring/summer 2017 due to Registrar	November 3
Thanksgiving recess	November 22 – 26
Last day of classes	December 9
Reading Days Reading days provide students with additional study time for final examinations. Faculty may schedule optional study sessions, but regular classes or exams may not be held.	December 11 – 12
Exam Period	Wed December 13 – Wed December 20
Degree Conferral Date The Winter Graduation Ceremony will be held on Thu December 21.	Sat December 23

ArtsBus - Dates for Fall 2017:
September 23
October 21
November 18

ArtsBus Credit and Policies: You are responsible for knowing and following Artsbus policies and rules. Please go to the ArtsBus website: <http://artsbus.gmu.edu> "Student Information" for important information regarding ArtsBus policy. For credit to appear on your transcript you must enroll in AVT 300. This also applies to anyone who intends to travel to New York independently, or do the DC Alternate Assignment. * If you plan/need to go on multiple ArtsBus trips during a semester and need them towards your total requirement, you must enroll in multiple sections of AVT 300* Non-AVT majors taking art classes do not need Artsbus credit BUT may need to go on the Artsbus for a class assignment. You can either sign up for AVT 300 or buy a ticket for the bus trip at the Center of the Arts. Alternate trips must be approved by the instructor of the course that is requiring an ArtsBus trip.

Visual Voices Lecture Series Fall 2017 Visual Voices is a year-long series of lectures by artists, art historians and others about contemporary art and art practice. Visual Voices lectures are held on Thursday evenings from 7:20- 9:00 p.m. in Harris Theater: <http://soa.gmu.edu/visualvoices/>
August 31... Simon Schwartz
Sept 14... Andy Birnbaum
Oct 5... Patricia Bello-Gillen
Oct 19... Sadie Barnette
Nov 11... Walter Kravitz

Students with Disabilities and Learning Differences If you have a diagnosed disability or learning difference and you need academic accommodations, please inform me at the beginning of the semester and contact the Disabilities Resource Center (SUB I room 234, 703-993-2474). You must provide your instructor with a faculty contact sheet from that office outlining the accommodations needed for your disability or learning difference. All academic accommodations must be arranged in advance through the DRC.

Cell Phones: School of Art Policies in accordance with George Mason University policy, turn off all beepers, cellular telephones and other wireless communication devices at the start of class. The instructor of the class will keep his/her cell phone active to assure receipt of any Mason Alerts in a timely fashion; or in the event that the instructor does not have a cell phone, he/she will designate one student to keep a cell phone active to receive such alerts.

Commitment to Diversity: This class will be conducted as an intentionally inclusive community that celebrates diversity and welcomes the participation in the life of the university of faculty, staff and students who reflect the diversity of our plural society. All may feel free to speak and to be heard without fear that the content of the opinions they express will bias the evaluation of their academic performance or hinder their opportunities for participation in class activities. In turn, all are expected to be respectful of each other without regard to race, class, linguistic background, religion, political beliefs, gender identity, sex, sexual orientation, ethnicity, age, veteran's status, or physical ability.

Statement on Ethics in Teaching and Practicing Art and Design: As professionals responsible for the education of undergraduate and graduate art and design students, the faculty of the School of Art adheres to the ethical standards and practices incorporated in the professional Code of Ethics of our national accreditation organization, The National Association of Schools of Art and Design (NASAD).

Open Studio Hours: SOA teaching studios are open to students for extended periods of time mornings, evenings and weekends whenever classes are not in progress. Policies, procedures and schedules for studio use are established by the SOA studio faculty and are posted in the studios.

Official Communications via GMU E-Mail Mason uses electronic mail to provide official information to students. Examples include communications from course instructors, notices from the library, notices about academic standing, financial aid information, class materials, assignments, questions, and instructor feedback. Students are responsible for the content of university communication sent to their Mason e-mail account, and are required to activate that account and check it regularly.

Attendance Policies Students are expected to attend the class periods of the courses for which they register. In-class participation is important not only to the individual student, but also to the class as a whole. Because class participation may be a factor in grading, instructors may use absence, tardiness, or early departure as de facto evidence of nonparticipation. Students who miss an exam with an acceptable excuse may be penalized according to the individual instructor's grading policy, as stated in the course syllabus.

Honor Code Students in this class are bound by the Honor Code, and are responsible knowing the rules, as stated on the George Mason University website's Academic Integrity page (<http://oai.gmu.edu/the-mason-honor-code-2/>). "To promote a stronger sense of mutual responsibility, trust, and fairness among all members of the Mason community, and with the desire for greater academic and personal achievement, we, the student members of the university community, have set forth this honor code:

Student members of the George Mason University community pledge not to cheat, plagiarize, steal, or lie in matters related to academic work.

Mason's Commitment: To create an environment that is innovative, diverse, entrepreneurial, and accessible—helping you avoid accidental or intentional violations of the Honor Code."

Writing Center Students who are in need of intensive help with grammar, structure or mechanics in their writing should make use of the services of Writing Center, located in Robinson A116 (703-993-1200). The services of the Writing Center are available by appointment, online and, occasionally, on a walk-in basis. The Collaborative Learning Hub Located in Johnson Center 311 (703-993-3141), the lab offers in-person one-on-one support for the Adobe Creative Suite, Microsoft Office, Blackboard, and a variety of other software. Dual monitor PCs make the lab ideal for collaborating on group projects, Macs are also available; as well as a digital recording space, collaborative tables, and a SMART Board. Free workshops are also available (Adobe and Microsoft) through Training and Certification; visit ittraining.gmu.edu to see the schedule of workshops and to sign up.