

ARTSAD/MFA #6110: Advanced Curatorial Practice: The 31st Century Museum

August 1 - 19, 3W4 Summer 2011

Monday – Friday, 1:00pm – 4:00pm.

Sullivan Galleries conference/classroom

Instructors:

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and Professor Robert Peters (rcp5@uchicago.edu)

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Course Description:

Curators work at the intersection of many protagonists and professions in the making of exhibitions; their task is always a cooperative, if not a collaborative, venture. The shows created, in turn, record history, reanalyze it, and sometimes make history. But what is the reason behind a show? And how can a sharp clarification of aim—that goes to the very root of this enterprise—not only determine the artists or work to include, but also the shape a show takes, enabling the curator to steer the effort through the opportunities and obstacles that arise. This course will look at current critical questions of curating and exhibition making, and the process of arriving at a curatorial voice, while also working productively with others. Classroom lectures, discussion, readings, and assignments will also include consideration of gallery and public space, public programming and audience experience.

As the Kamin Lertchaiprasert writes: “I believe that art is the process of learning about yourself in both toward life and nature. I do not believe that art can be taught; we can only exchange our opinion, ideas, and experiences among ourselves. Therefore, the objective of this project will be based on the participant’s process of learning about yourself.” With the concept that our “self” is our museum and our “spirit” is a work of art, students will be asked to realize this value within themselves.

The focus will be an exhibition in the North Gallery of the Sullivan Galleries. It will consist of students’ projects based on personal experiences in relation to this theme, and every member of the class will undertake this exhibition with the idea that they are at once the artist, curator, and museum. Thus, the exhibition will be designed collectively.

Required reading to be completed prior to the first day of class:

Books:

Fukuoka, Masanobu, *One Straw Revolution: The Natural Way of Farming*. (Emmaus, Pennsylvania: Rodale Press, 1978). (Out of printed, access from: <http://www.arvindguptatoys.com/arvindgupta//onestraw.pdf>)

Leonard, Koren, *Wabi-Sabi: for Artists, Designers, Poets & Philosophers* (California: Imperfect Publishing, 1994).

Stewart, Susan, *On Longing: narratives of the Miniature, the Gigantic, the Souvenir, the Collection*, (Duke University Press, Durham & London, 1993). *Note especially chapters 2, 3, 5, and conclusion (pages 171-173).*

Suzuki, Shunryu, *Zen Mind, Beginner's Mind*, (Boston: Shambhala. 1987).

Articles (digital files to be provided);

Jean Baudrillard, "The System of Collecting" *The Cultures of Collecting*, John Elsner and Roger Cardinal eds. (London: Reakon Books, 1997): 7-24.

Daniel Birnbaum, "The Lay of the Land" *Artforum* (Summer, 2005): 270-74, 346.

Jorge Luis Borges, "Pierre Menard, Author of Don Quixote" and "The Library of Babel" *Ficciones* (New York: Grove press, 1962); 45-55(Menard), 79-88(Babel).

Pierre Bourdieu , "Introduction" & "Postscript Towards a 'vulgar' critique of 'pure' Critiques" *Distinctions: A Social Critique of the judgment of Taste* (Cambridge : Harvard University Press, 1984): 1-7, 486-500.

James Clifford, *The Predicament of Culture; Twentieth-Century Ethnography, literature, and Art*, (Harvard University Press, 1988) pp. 189-257.

Karen Demavivas, "The Land" *Nothing* (Chiang Mai: CMU Art Museum, 2004): 54-82.

Stanley Fish, "How to Recognize a Poem When you See one" *Is there a Text in This Class?* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1980): 322-337.

Gridthiya Gaweewong, "An Intersection of Buddha and Duchamp" *Nothing*(Chiang Mai): CMU Art Museum, 2004): 12-29.

Donna Haraway, "Teddy Bear Patriarchy; Taxidermy in The Garden of Eden New York City, 1908-1936" *Primate Visions: Gender, Race, and nature in the World of Modern Science* (New York: Routledge, Chapman & Hall Inc.,1989): 26-58.

Lawrence w. Levine, "Prologue" & "Epilogue" *High Brow Lowbrow; The emergence of cultural hierarchy in America* (Boston: Harvard University Press, 1986): 1-9, 243-256.

Vipash Purichanont, "Upon Arrival at the Station..." *Fine Art* (March 2011, Vol. 8, No. 77): 44-60. (Access from: http://issuu.com/31century/docs/fineart77_mar2011)

D.T. Suzuki, "History of Zen Buddhism from Bodhidharma to Hui-Neng" *Essays in Zen Buddhism: First Series* (New York: Grove Press, 1949): 165-228.

Websites:

The Land Foundation: www.thelandfoundation.org

31st century museum website: <http://31century.org>

Vipassana Meditation: <http://www.dhamma.org/>

Additional Recommended Activity prior to the first day of class:

Vipassana Meditation cannot be understood without practice. Therefore, it is recommended that students take a short meditation course during the summer before class begins. Students can search for a meditation house nearby to where they will be during the summer. <http://www.dhamma.org/> also can be a great resource for those particularly interested in Vipassana Meditation.

Requirements and Evaluation

Students will be evaluated by their participation and contributions to the class.

Week One:

- Visit the Field Museum

Write a 300- to 500-word analysis of their experience of the institution through the lens of the questions addressed/raised by the readings you will read this summer; **please hand it in on Friday August 5.**

Such questions to be considered are:

1. What are the bounds of the collection?
2. Is there "coherence"? If so, how is it articulated?
3. What differences does one find in the collection exhibitions--conceptually and in the display strategies employed over time (the museum displays are done in different historical periods)?

- Student Presentation

In the end of the first week, students will be asked give a short presentation of their life and work to all the members of the class.

Week Two:

During the second week of class, we will have a field trip to some other collection-based museums in Chicago. Students can submit names of such institutions that they interested to visit; **please send to Vipash before the July 15.**

Students will work in groups on a field study of institutional curatorial strategies. They will make presentations on Friday August 12.

Week Three:

In the third week of class, students will bring a reading of their choice to share with and distribute to the class; it should be a text which they feel can help frame the exhibition structure.

Through the three weeks of class students will also contribute to 31st century museum's blog through blogposts , such as keeping a written or visual daily journal, but in some manner that is in keeping with their own practice. Students will also, of course, be working on making the exhibition!

Class Schedule

Week One: Learning about yourself

August 1 Lecture by Kamin Lertchaiprasert on his life and work; his personal everyday life-art practice and social activities, included Umong Silpadhamma, the land foundation and 31st Century Museum at the same day.

August 2 Seminar led by Kamin Lertchaiprasert on 31st Century Museum of Contemporary Sprit: What is contemporary spirit?

Questions to think about:

1. What is the different meaning of "Creativity" between Western and Eastern concept? Is originality really exist?
2. What does the relationship between object and person? Is a good art work necessity created by good person/artist?
3. What is the value to evaluate art and life? or is it the same thing? How could we tell the different between art in the present day (ready-made object and rational aesthetics) and everyday life activity and common object that we use in our real life?
4. How much responsibility does artist and curator should concern of society?
5. What is contemporary spirit?

August 3 Lecture by Professor Robert Peters on his practice.

August 4 Learning about yourself: Students' Presentation

August 5 Learning about yourself: Students' Presentation continue

Week Two: Fieldwork

August 8 Meditation Workshop (Instructor: TBA)

August 9 Field Trip with Professor Robert Peters: The Field Museum

August 10 Field Trip with Professor Robert Peters: Macy's Department Store on State Street (former Marshall Field's)

August 11 Field Trip with Professor Robert Peters: location determined by Student nomination

August 12 Summary of the week, Group presentation.

Week Three: Making the Museum

August 15-16 Brainstorming, planning for the exhibition

August 17-19 Working on the exhibition of 31st Century Museum

