

# CREATIVE WORKSHOP: ART AS SOCIAL JUSTICE

RESIDENTIAL COLLEGE IN THE ARTS & HUMANITIES | MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY  
FALL 2010 | RCAH 291 SECTION 003

## PROFESSOR INFORMATION |

Dylan A.T. Miner, PhD  
C230J Snyder Hall  
dminer@msu.edu  
884-1323

## DAY + TIME |

TTh 10:20-12:10 | E060 Snyder Hall

## OFFICE HOURS |

T 2:30-4:00 + by appointment

*'No hay un cambio social radical, que nos haga felices, que no sea creativo.'*

*'There cannot be radical social change, at least that which makes us happy, that is not also creative.'*

– Mujeres Creando, a Bolivian anarcho-feminist collective

## COURSE DESCRIPTION |

In a late-capitalist world of endless consumption, where mass-produced commodities and highly designed products are the lingua franca, the creation of hand-made objects becomes an overt act of resistance. This workshop will use printed media, broadly defined, as the locus of creative activity and participants will begin to recognize themselves as active cultural producers and not simply passive consumers. In this fashion, we will destroy the myth of the autonomy of art by demonstrating the direct (and indirect) relationship between art and the creation of a socially just society. We will investigate how art functions to transform the inequities of contemporary society, the role art plays within our society, and how it may be positively applied. Focusing on non-elite artforms, particularly printed matter and hand-made multiples, students will begin to formulate a theory on how and why art is needed if, as the Zapatistas maintain, '*un otro mundo es posible*' (another world is possible).

Since printed material is everywhere, we will learn how printmaking may be used to evoke a more just and equitable future. During the workshop, students will be expected to work both individually and collaboratively in a way in which the workshop (hopefully) becomes a democratic and egalitarian environment. Projects will be 'political' in orientation, focusing on solidarity work and social justice activism. Participants will be expected to work hard (and attend open studio hours in the evening), but have lots of fun in the process. We will investigate and produce various forms of printed matter but primarily focus on the stencil, relief print, serigraph, and monoprint.

## THESES ON ART |

- 01 | Art is an alternative to the mechanization of contemporary life.
- 02 | Art offers a specter of humanity in an alienated existence.
- 03 | Art cannot be learned. Art must always be practiced.
- 04 | Art is the questioning of 'traditional' models.
- 05 | Art is the production of human relations.
- 06 | Art generates transformation.
- 07 | Art enables heterodoxies.
- 08 | Art is social justice.
- 09 | Art is resistance.
- 10 | Art challenges.

## OBJECTIVES |

Due to the interdisciplinarity of this workshop, the goals and objectives are likewise multiple. By discussing, analyzing, and making art, students will accomplish the following:

- Produce avant-garde printed objects;
- Understand and utilize various printmaking techniques;
- Examine the complex role that art plays in contemporary society;
- Investigate the history of art and visual cultures;

- Explain how and why we create meaning through art;
- Interpret the multiple meanings of art;
- Recognize the potential to transform the world through art.

The course will also help you meet general liberal learning outcomes, as outlined by the American Association of Colleges and Universities. These include, but are not limited to:

- Develop a robust *knowledge of human cultures and the natural world*;
- Improve *intellectual and practical skills*, such as inquiry and analysis, critical and creative thinking, communication, visual literacy, and problem solving;
- Enhance *personal and social responsibility* through direct civic participation, ongoing intercultural competency, and continued ethical reasoning and action;
- Demonstrate *integrative learning* by synthesizing creative and analytical thinking across disciplinary fields.

### VISITING ARTISTS |

JIMMY MANNING + KANANGINAK POOTOOGOOK

OCTOBER 11-14

### TEXTS |

Since you will be expected to spend a few hundred dollars on supplies throughout the semester, I will place all readings as PDF files to be downloaded from [angel.msu.edu](http://angel.msu.edu). Please be advised that these readings must be read in their entirety before coming to class. Failure to comply with these obligations will result in the need to purchase hardcopies of course readings.

### MATERIALS |

Unfortunately, art costs money (and at times lots of it)! Therefore, you will be required to purchase (or find) certain tools and materials for your projects. Luckily, most of our projects are not extremely cost prohibitive and at time may be made using recycled or found materials. In other cases, however, I can direct you where items may be purchased. You will be expected to purchase required materials.

Items available at Kresge Art Store or online:

- x-acto knife ;
- linoleum;
- sketchbook;
- paper, for all assignments;
- screen for screen printing;
- additional supplied purchased on an on-needed basis.

### GRADING |

- |  |     |
|--|-----|
| • project 1                              | 15% |
| • project 2                              | 20% |
| • project 3                              | 20% |
| • project 4                              | 25% |
| • participation + open studio attendance | 20% |

### DEMONSTRATIONS |

There are a small number of demonstrations scheduled throughout the semester. These demos will give a brief 'how-to' on a particular artform. If you are interested in having me demonstrate additional media, supplementary demos may be scheduled as needed. Moreover, you are also welcome to share your individual artmaking knowledge with others (including me), through either an ad hoc interaction or through a more formal demonstration. In this class, we will each envision ourselves as knowledgeable artists. Therefore, we will be working collectively and collaboratively on various projects.

### CRITIQUES |

After each of the projects, we will conduct a formal workshop critique. Everyone is required to participate in these activities. Without your participation, critiques will be neither fruitful nor helpful. Remember that

when commenting on others' artworks, criticism should be given in a constructive fashion. However, these activities sometimes get heated and we must recognize that critiquing someone's art is not a critique of that person as an individual. Rather, these comments are intended to help positively shape one's individual artistic growth.

### **OPEN STUDIO |**

Additional open studios outside of allotted workshop (class) time have been established. You are expected to attend a minimum of one open studio per week. I will leave a sign-in sheet with the studio proctor, as to assure your participation. This will commence immediately after proctors have been assigned to the art studio.

Since this is a creative workshop with a focus on non-hierarchical peer interaction, attendance is compulsory to allow for equitable interaction. Envision ourselves a collective where individual responsibility is also a communal one.

### **ATTENDANCE |**

As part of the Residential College in the Arts & Humanities, attendance is mandatory!! Although I will not be actively 'taking roll,' you will be obliged to actively make and discuss art within the workshop. Therefore, continued absences will alter your ability to comprehend the overall themes of the workshop. Your presence in the workshop is needed for full participation credit. As such, your attendance may positively and/or negatively affect your final grade through multiple venues.

### **PARTICIPATION |**

Twenty percent of your final grade is based on participation. As a workshop, your daily presence is expected. To get full participation credit, you will also need to be active during the workshop, engage in class critiques, and attend open studio weekly.

### **POLICY ON ACADEMIC FREEDOM AND INTEGRITY |**

In agreement with Article 2.3.3 of the *Academic Freedom Report* which states that 'the student shares with the faculty the responsibility for maintaining the integrity of scholarship, grades, and professional standards,' it is expected that students neither plagiarize nor copy from a peer's intellectual or creative work. In addition, the RCAH adheres to the policies on academic honesty as specified in *General Student Regulations* 1.0, Protection of Scholarship and Grades, and in the All-University Policy on Integrity of Scholarship and Grades, which are included in *Spartan Life: Student Handbook + Resource Guide* (<http://www.vps.msu.edu/SpLife/index.htm>). Students who engage in academically dishonest activities may receive a 0.0 on that given assignment or for the overall course.

### **POLICY ON ACCOMMODATIONS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES |**

Students with disabilities that may interfere with completing your assigned course work may speak with me, as well as contact the *Resource Center for Persons with Disabilities* to establish reasonable accommodations. For an appointment with a counselor, call 353-9642 [voice] or 355-1293 [TTY].

## SYLLABUS

## WEEK 1 | SEPTEMBER 02

Thursday

## WEEK 2 | SEPTEMBER 06

Tuesday

Thursday

## WEEK 3 | SEPTEMBER 13

Tuesday

Thursday

## WEEK 4 | SEPTEMBER 20

Tuesday

Thursday

## WEEK 5 | SEPTEMBER 27

Tuesday

Thursday

## WEEK 6 | OCTOBER 04

Tuesday

Thursday

## WEEK 7 | OCTOBER 11

Tuesday

Thursday

## WEEK 08 | OCTOBER 18

Tuesday

Thursday

## WEEK 09 | OCTOBER 25

Tuesday

Thursday

## WEEK 10 | NOVEMBER 01

Tuesday

## READINGS + PROJECTS

## INTRODUCTION

Watch | *Retooling Dissent*Listen | *Bad at Sports #34* (Interview with Claire Pentecost), at home

## STENCIL

Read | *Overspray Magazine # 07 and #09*, PDF

Walsh, 'Mapping Social and Cultural Space,' PDF

Griffiths, 'What is a Print?,' PDF

Read | Rodríguez and MacPhee, *Reproduce and Revolt*, PDF

Davidson, 'This is not a Manifesto,' PDF

Howze, 'Stencil Art: A Revolutionary Meme,' PDF

## STENCIL

Read | View stencil websites, including: stencilarchive.org, stencilrevolution.com, woostercollective.com, cutandpaint.org, justseeds.org

Read | *Art Work*, PDF

## RELIEF PRINTING

Read | Hughes &amp; Vernon-Morris, 164-249

Griffiths, 'Relief Printing Processes,' PDF

Read | Billing, Lind, and Nilsson, *Taking the Matter into Common Hands*, PDF

## RELIEF PRINTING

Read | *California Printmaker*, PDF

Williams, 'Evolution of a Revolution,' PDF

Read | None

## RELIEF PRINTING

Read | MacPhee, *Paper Politics*, PDF

Read | None

## RELIEF PRINTING

Visit from Jimmy Manning and Kananginak Pootoogook

Read | Kardosh, 'The Other Kananginak Pootoogook,' PDF

Kardosh, 'The New Generation: A Radical Defiance,' PDF.

Lalonde, 'Cape Dorset: 50 Years of Printmaking,' PDF

Critique |

## SERIGRAPH

Read | Hughes &amp; Vernon-Morris, 308-365

Read | Cushing, *¡Revolución!*, PDF

Additional reading TBA

## SERIGRAPH

Read | Lipsitz, 'Just Another Poster,' PDF

Read | None

## SERIGRAPH

Visit from Dignidad Rebelde (Jesús Barraza)

Read | Douglas, *Black Panther*, PDF

Bradley and Esche, 166-171

Palmer, "Revolution in our Lifetime," PDF

Thursday	Read   None
<b>WEEK 11   NOVEMBER 08</b>	<b>SERIGRAPH</b>
Tuesday	Read   TBA
Thursday	Read   None
<b>WEEK 12   NOVEMBER 15</b>	<b>SERIGRAPH</b>
Tuesday	Critique
Thursday	No Class   'Thanksgiving'
<b>WEEK 13   NOVEMBER 22</b>	<b>MONOPRINTING</b>
Tuesday	Read   Hughes & Vernon-Morris, 110-125 + 366-394
Thursday	Read   None
<b>WEEK 14   NOVEMBER 29</b>	<b>OPEN STUDIO</b>
Tuesday	Read   Bourriaud, <i>Relational Aesthetics</i> , PDF Bishop, 'The Social Turn,' PDF
Thursday	Read   None
<b>WEEK 15   DECEMBER 06</b>	<b>OPEN STUDIO</b>
Tuesday	Read   None
Thursday	Read   None
<b>WEEK 16   DECEMBER 13</b>	<b>FINAL CRITIQUE</b>
	Examination period, Monday, December, 12:45-2:45

**NOTE |**

This is a working document. Additional readings | assignments may be inserted or altered as this workshop organically develops. This will, of course, depend on the interests and needs of the workshop, as well as the time constraints of the academic semester.