**Art 420: Advanced Drawing**

**Monday Wednesday 6-8:50, Room 238**

**Professor Jennifer Meanley**

Gatewood 222

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Office Hours: By appointment/Tuesday and Thursday  
  
**Course Description:**

Advanced (Capstone) Drawing is the terminal drawing class for all Drawing, Painting and Printmaking Majors. This course is developed along a multi-pronged program of advancing students’ capability for: Mature Visual Thought Processes; Rigorous Conceptual and Thematic Research and Development; The carrying out of this research within a serially developed body of work; The ability to speak intelligently and critically about this work and that of your peers.

**Student Learning Outcomes and Expectations:**

1. Students will be expected to be open to learning, and intellectually as well as visually inquisitive in this class. This entails engaging fully in all in-class exercises and drawing prompts, especially early in the semester when the structure of the work-time will be more guided.
2. Students will also be expected to keep a sketchbook outside of class as a method for developing artistic practice. You will often be assigned sketchbook assignments in preparation for independently guided work. These should be taken seriously and given ample time and consideration. You will be graded on the seriousness and breadth of your sketchbook.
3. Students will be expected to advance their material investigations and to be innovative with materials as an investigative tool, as well as to integrate new materials into their drawing practice.
4. Students are expected to participate fully in class lectures, readings, and videos, as well as to write critically when expected to. This will entail writing responses to assigned readings, videos viewed in class, and writing in response to the progress of your own work.
5. Students will expected to participate fully in all class critiques and peer critiques.
6. Students are expected to develop an understanding of the function of drawing as a serious and integrated component of their studio practice.
7. Students will be able to develop a serious and purposeful body of work guided by research, conceptual development, practical application of materials, and the continual demonstrated mastery of new and innovative skill sets.
8. Students will be expected to truly understand and demonstrate the importance of time investment in there work. A MINIMUM of 8 hours of out of class time per week is expected for every 6 hours of class contact hours. When the work demonstrates itself to be of quality and is SUCCESSFUL, that is when an ABOVE AVERAGE grade will be merited. An AVERAGE grade is a C grade.

**Class requirements and Grading Proceedures:**

**Students will be graded on a total of four categories:   
  
1. Attendance**

**2. Research and Preparation (Preparatory works as well as the upkeep of a serious sketchbook devoted to drawing and notation)**

**3. Development of Independent Drawing Portfolio (independently guided work) and the evidence of investment of effort and INTEREST in this endeavor.**

**4. Participation in class work, class readings, writings and discussions; inquisitiveness and INITIATIVE demonstrated in drawing assignments as well as individually guided work.**

**Overall Semester Grade Breakdown**

The overall semester grade is based on the ability to achieve 100 points total.

**Midterm Grade:** The midterm grade will be based on the first half of the semester. Students can achieve up to 50 points.

Independent Studio Work (30 points) Research and Preparation (10 Points) Participation in critiques and in-class discussion(attendance is included in this category) (10 points)  **Total=50 Points**

**Midterm Grade Breakdown**

**A** = 43-50 points

1. = 40-42 points

**B+** = 37-39 points

**B** = 33-36 points

1. = 30-32 points

**C+** = 27-29 points

**C** = 23-26 points

1. = 20-22 points

**D** = 15-19 points

**F** = 14 points or lower

**Final Grade:** The final grade will comprise those points earned during the first half of the semester as well as those earned during the second half of the semester. Students can achieve up to 100 points.

Midterm Grade Points (50 points) Independent Studio Work/Second Half of Semester (30 points) Research and Preparation/Second Half of Semester (10 points) Participation in critiques and in-class discussion/Second Half of Semester (10 points) **Total=100 points**

**Final Grade Breakdown**

**A** = 93-100 points

1. **=** 90-92 points

**B+** = 87-89 points

**B** = 83-86 points

1. = 80-82 points

**C+** = 77-79 points

**C** = 73-76 points

1. = 70-72 points

**D** = 65-69 points

**F** = 64 points or lower

**Attendance Expectations:**

It is expected that you will attend EVERY class and be prompt to class, as well as work until the end of the work period.

One unexcused absence is permitted during the semester. Each and every subsequent absence will result in a full letter grade deduction from your final numeric average.   
  
\* Note that we are very fortunate to now have access to work spaces in a facility that is close to campus. This affords you studio space that is all your own, and which you will have 24 hour access to. However, this also means that work time will occasionally be happening after lecture, and on your own. I expect that you are fully invested in using this space and your time to your advantage.

**Required Readings and screened videos:**

**The order of these may change, and additions to this list will be subject to my discretion and as I see fit.**

1. Annie Dillard, *On Seeing,* excerpted from Three and Pilgrim at Tinker Creek, by Annie Dillard
2. William Kentridge in Conversation with Christov Bakargiev
3. William Kentridge documentary
4. Sarah Sze in conversation with Phong Bui, The Brooklyn Rail
5. Gary Hill: I Believe It is An Image, (video)

**Topical outline and an Open-Ended Calendar:**

**Week One:**

***First Day, Tom Friedman reading***

***Bring to class an object or form that is of tactile, visual and material interest to you. Bring a variety of drawing media as well as at least 20 different types of drawing surfaces.   
  
First Day, Tom Friedman reading***

***-*- For all pieces, a visual log or journal that constitutes the trying ground for making visual and unified, (a piece) that may not be concrete as a conventional drawing. This will be the record of your activity and curiosity in this class and you will be evaluated upon it along with the intensity of your applied inquiries.**

-What does the practice of drawing mean to you currently and how do you use it in your practice?

-Is drawing about media, action, interaction, inquisition, what else and, *How* s*o*?

-How might you change your approach to one that is (more) informed, though immediate, generative and spontaneous?

-What would you ideally like drawing to mean to you as an integrated facet of your process, and what would you like it to mean as you approach your work in this class and during this semester? (here it would be appropriate to define your ideal notion of drawing as an expanded and personal interpretation: is it about materials, process, is it social, is it collaborative, is it about alternative processes and materials, does it happen in space, is it about space… etc.

-Series of 20 drawings dictated by an idea or prompt (Creation of a prompts from txt. Mei Mei Berssenbrugge)

-**Quotes from Friedman:  
  
-** *‘I started to think about my work more in the background of my mind. I’d sort of plant an idea in my head and then something would come from that. For me it’s a new type of thinking process: not primary thinking, but allowing something to just sort of develop and happen in the background’*

*- “ I have an idea of something being explanatory, but once I begin to explain, it’s not what it’s about … The explaining becomes the object, as opposed to the indicator.”*

-(**Describe, to the group, visually and in detail your most current or recent studio work. In this description, please verbally eliminate any descriptors that rely on content, concept, or narrative as an aid in description. The description is to be purely visual/experiential and exact).**  
  
-Series of 20 drawings dictated by material approach  
  
-Installation of Drawings as an environment:  
  
-What is needed to clarify these works in relation to one another, where are there gaps in visual coherence that lead to confusion?  
-What is that confusion about and how will you resolve it?

-I want you to write a detailed list of all the possible ways you would like to change your first efforts and approaches and what you would like to revisit. What do you hope to clarify?  
  
-The next three hours of the following day will be spent readdressing these points

-Also, documenting yourself at work. How does this change your activity and behavior in the studio?

**HOMEWORK: 15 COLLAGES**

**Week Two:**

***-Robert Irwin Reading, Science and Art   
  
-Being within a darkened space/ Perceiving yourself perceive***

***Quote from James Turrell and Robert Irwin:***

*‘We are dealing with the limits of an experience – not for instance, the limits of painting. We have choses that experience out of the realm of experience to be defined as ‘art’ because having this label has given it special attention. Perhaps this is all “Art” means – this frame of mind.’*

-A period of time discussing and writing about the meaningfulness of this experience and reflecting on the question of perception, as well as (our) assumptions, it raises:

-What is lost and what is gained in this experience?  
  
- ‘Shifts in sense dependency’  
  
-What do you most take for granted as a conceit for a perceptual response (in whatever medium)

-How do you employ scale distance and what are the visual cues you use to accomplish this?  
  
-(Meeting and discussion) what artists do you feel best exploit principles of scale and or distance in their work, how and why do they do this? (What range of senses of/in the viewer do they most exploit)

-Evaluate your process and assign a (visual) value to the order or hierarchy of visual cues you use when constructing a piece:  
  
**Quote from Irwin:***‘Reason/individual/intuition/feeling: Reason is the processing of our interface with our own subjective being.’*  
  
***-Personal Notational Values:***

**-What are these values and/or what do they communicate?  
-What do you most rely on visually to translate an experience to the viewer?**

**-What do you most neglect or overlook?**

**-Three hours of work following the evaluation and discussion of the above content.  
  
-Drawings around the building and in the outdoor space using the notion of a composite space as a way of composing and building.**

**Week Three:**

***. Georges Perec, Species of Spaces***

**-How does Perec manipulate form as an expression of concept and/or content?   
-What is unique or powerful about this writing?  
-What is unique or powerful about reading this writing?**

**-How would you interpret a relational synthesis of this in terms of a drawn experience?**

**Two Quotes from Perec to be mindful of:  
  
*‘****When nothing arrests our gaze, it carries a very long way. But if it meets with nothing, it sees nothing, it sees only what it meets. Space is what arrests our gaze, what our sight stumbles over: the obstacle, bricks, an angle, a vanishing point. Space is when it makes an angle, when it stops, when we have to turn for it to start off again. There’s nothing ectoplasmic about space; it has edges, it doesn’t go off in all directions, it does all that needs to be done for railway lines to meet well short of infinity.’  
  
‘Space is a doubt: I have constantly to mark it, to designate it. It’s never mine, never given to me, I have to conquer it.’* **-Approach three hours of (drawing) with this in mind.**

**Day Two:  
  
-**Consider how you might broach the issue and experience of time and temporality in your work.   
-How might you synthesize the demand for, or require, that time be a factor in the viewer’s experience of your work.  **-**What shifts in new or different approaches to media could allow for a completely new and previously unchartered move in this direction.

-Is there anything that you have really wanted to try but have either put on the back burner because it is not ‘the primary work’ at this point, because of a personal taboo, or simply because have been too afraid/intimidated, to try? This is a good time to consider these ‘day dreams’!

**Homework**: 15 hours of work on a single large drawing (start and completion of a single piece that begins your individually guided work)   
  
**Week Four:**

***Sarah Sze, Brooklyn Rail:***

***-Thoughts about modeling systems vs. modeling behavior?   
-How much should the artist take responsibility for the ‘chance’ or ‘spontaneous’ sense of experience a viewer feels she or he is having with a work?   
-What is the tension between structure and embellishment or ornament in your work? How do you define these two components and how are they (or not) integrated?***

***-In what ways do your works dictate meaning and in what way do they invite meaning or interpretation?***  
**The work:**  
-Creating a piece within an environment.

-Evaluation of the environment and it’s natural coefficients   
-What are plausible opportunities for intervention or interjection?  
-How can we create a language that is specific to a place or a space, and how do we define a visual language that determines the distinct meaning or significance of the word ‘installation’?

***Robert Irwin in the Desert:***

*In the beginning I proceeded in a very awkward and obvious way. Say, for example, there are a lot of things that just visually contradict your expectations; they just will not fall into perspective: foreground becomes background, background becomes foreground, or the land seems to stand up on end rather than lay flat the way one logically knows it’s supposed to be. So I began simply to mark those events, to put down sightlines, in a way. And I found that there were certain continuing situations: if I returned to them a year later, I could find the same place and essentially the same energy would be there. I’m not talking about some sort of spiritual or mystical activity. I’m simply talking about my ability to perceive what was going on around me, that there was something very ‘tactiley,’ tangibly existent in this one particular area, say, which was simply not present two miles down the road.   
  
So originally I marked these places quite literally. I laid a small concrete block flush to the ground at the place where I was standing and stretched a stainless steel piano wire out toward the horizon. It might go off a mile; it simply pointed in a direction. And that was the piece.*

**Week Five:**

**William Kentridge video and interview: time and temporality: the serial in art as a device and strategy.**

**Week Six**

**-Art as Collaboration and/or Participation**

**-Art as Diaristic or Documentary   
-Art as a social onus or responsibility**  
-**Film: Martha Rosler**

-Issues to consider:  
  
-Private vs. Public space and the implications thereof (both Rosler and Whiteread tread on this ground)

**From Doreen Massey’s essay:**

*One thing to say first is that, of course, this sculpture was not called Home; it was called House. And this naming, it seems to me, reinforces mightily the impact of all the other challenges to sentimentalized notions of the domestic which it works so well. It immediately distances us, it uses a word somehow from the public sphere to designate a work which is evidently redolent of what we customarily think of as private, and a word too, which refers more to the physicality of the walls and roof, which have been removed, which not no longer are, than to the space of social interaction which, in contrast, has now so physically been both exposed and filled in. The very naming, then, gives clues to the spatial disruptions House effected.’*

-**Art as surrogate rather than memorial experience (in regard to time or place lost)   
-Art as a social interface  
  
-Art that demands interpretation**

**A planned intervention within a space… this may not happen due to scheduling conflicts, but the prompts are worthwhile to include here and for future dialog**

These two days will be devoted to a group collaborative-project within the classroom or alternatively dedicated space.   
  
Prefaced by reading both Sarah Sze in conversation with Phong Bui and an essay on Rachel Whiteread’s *House*  
  
Conversation within the group should (prepatory at least once the week prior to install, and taking place within the space itself) should address the following concerns:  
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What are the natural characteristics or coefficients of the space; what are its attributes?   
  
-In how many ways and in how many different ways can all the individuals imagine contributing?

Process of assessment:

-What should the media be?  
-What should the content of the work address and potentially how?  
-How should the work engage the community?  
-How should the work be documented?

-How should we write about or present this project?

Evaluation of our social group and agreeance:

-Might we delegate a place within the space that we operates as a ‘beginning point’?  
-How should that beginning function visually, structurally and materially?  
-Can we assign a few roles in this process that enable this beginning and allow the energy and momentum for subsequent decisions?   
  
-Material responsibilities:   
-What will you specifically contribute and how open is your contribution to the response of another artist, in possibly a vastly different medium?

(reference the Messanger Project as a guideline for call and response behavior)

***Art as Diaristic and/or Documentarian, Martha Rosler, Matta Clark***