**Capstone Painting Seminar  
238, 6-9 pm**

**Professor, Jennifer Meanley**

**Office, Gatewood, 222  
Office hours: Thursday evenings during the second half of class**[**jhmeanle@uncg.edu**](mailto:jhmeanle@uncg.edu) ***Course Expecations:***

**This is a mandatory class for all Senior Painting Majors. It is requisite that you attend all class meetings and that you remain available for meeting and critique throughout both, Tuesday and Thursday, during the fifteen week cycle of the class.**

**I have largely maintained a graduate level model for this class, as it is my expectation that you all function as serious practitioners, both in the studio and during the studio time you are responsible for structuring. For every 6 hours of contact throughout the week, I expect that you are devoting between 10 and 15 hours of studio time to your practice throughout the rest of the week.**

**Generally, we will begin each Tuesday with a reading and a discussion as a group, guided also by small writing assignments which should enable you to clarify your thoughts and intentions as well as to set achievable goals for yourselves. You should always attend class with a sketchbook or notebook that serves as both a place for writing and a place for small visual works. If I am lecturing or we are discussing, I expect that you are also actively listening and writing.**

***Learning Outcomes:***

**-You should leave this class with a well developed body of work that reflects your understanding and achievement of a well established visual, formal and conceptual painting language.   
  
-You should leave this class with the ability to articulate your practice and your work both aurally and in writing, and this includes understanding your context as a contemporary artist relative to both, your art historical influences, as well as your contemporary peers and influences.**

**-You should leave this class functioning as a serious artist who is capable of structuring your own studio time, managing that time wisely, and fully following through with your visual investigations toward the realization of work that is intelligent as well as complete and work which warrants critique and discussion from your peers.**

**-You should leave this class with the ability to present your practice and your work to your faculty in a formal critique scenario. This will require that you also develop a strongly articulated artist statement and a sensitive rationale for the content of your work both in concept and materially.**

***The following is a calendar of events and readings.* It is my goal that we investigate as many of the following questions, through our various acts of Painting, as we are able to.**

**I.**

***First Day, Cintel Steel and Jennifer Samet in conversation:***

***-*- 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 painting mean to you currently and how do you use it in your practice? Meaning: what is your definition of painting?

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

-What current fears or taboos do you have regarding painting?

-What habits do you know that you have?

-What would you ideally like dPainting 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 Painting as an expanded and personal interpretation: is it about materials, process, is it social, is it collaborative, is it emotional, political, 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)  
  
  
***Day Two:***

-Analysis of your responses to my questions

-Looking at painters and volunteering names/artists for the group  
-Compiling a list

***Dawn Clements in Conversation with Eve Ascheim, Reading   
  
-Homework:  
A creation of 10-15 small ink wash studies guided in some way by the following formal promts:  
  
-The use two values (black and white)  
-The consideration of positive and negative space***

***-The construction of a point of view, as a distinctly different approach from the use of ‘perspective’  
-Considering the notion of subject vs. object  
-Considering light as shape  
-Considering mark as content  
-Considering content as psychic/cognitive, intellectual or emotional***

***Day Three:  
Conversation with Tom Friedman***

-**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?

**IV.**

***-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.**

***V. 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’!

***IV. 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.*

**Day Two:  
  
Doreen Massey’s essay on Rachel Whiteread:**

-Piece that is about perception rather than one that is aesthetically driven (Irwin in the Desert as a Prompt)

-Documentation and presentation to the group: in which the piece only exists as a record of the piece, in whatever form you choose or see is most fitting. How are you going to accomplish this, and how will you engage your peers in this experience?   
  
  
 **V. Last two days of work time:   
  
-Art as Collaboration and/or Participation**

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

-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 at GPS… this may not happen due to scheduling conflicts, but the prompts are worthwhile to include here and for future dialog**

***GPS Space:***

These two days will be devoted to a group collaborative-project at the GPS, down-town satellite 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***

What does painting give you the ability to do/express and to say that no other media or action can?  
How?

list the variables present within your intentions for the paintings: formal, emotional, political, social

clintel steed and jennifer samet in conversation