EXPANDED COURSE DESCRIPTION

VISUAL ARTS
School of the Arts, Media, Performance and Design
Department of Visual Art Art History

FA / VISA 3024C3.0 SECTION A
PAINTING: SHIFTING ABSTRACTION
FALL 2018 / WINTER 2019

COURSE CALENDAR DESCRIPTION

Examines the recent shift of the boundaries of abstraction and figuration in pictorial experience. In a series of painting, students create new relationships between abstraction and figuration by using the visual strategies of convergence, interference and mutation. Prerequisite: FA/VISA 1000 3.00; six credits from the FA/VISA 202x series of courses.

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INSTRUCTOR(S)

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<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Section / Format / Term</th>
<th>Contact Email</th>
<th>Contact Phone</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jones, Janet A</td>
<td>Sec. A / STD0 / F</td>
<td><a href="mailto:jjones@yorku.ca">jjones@yorku.ca</a></td>
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SPECIAL FEATURES

This is a thematic painting studio course that focuses on approaches to contemporary abstraction through three studio projects that each highlights a different abstract strategy: Metamorphosis, transformation and interference. Studio projects are introduced through class discussions and are explored in the assigned studio projects, which are followed by extensive class critiques.

Bibliography

The following are books that will be referenced during the course. They are pertinent both to a general understanding of contemporary visual art, in particular painting, and the themes we will be addressing in this course. In addition, articles and books, which suit each student’s individual project, will be recommended.


TOPICS AND CONCEPTS

Detailed Painting Project Descriptions:

Project 1- Metamorphosis: Creation, Destruction and Re-Creation.

“Every act of creation is first an act of destruction”, Picasso

Part One Creation: This project asks you to expand your painting process by engaging with materials and the creative process in new ways. Buy a large piece of unprimed canvas at least 4’x6’ or 3’x8’, a plastic ground sheet larger than the canvas, and masking tape. Place the canvas on the floor on top of the plastic sheet. Tape the plastic sheet to the floor. Using water, rags, sponges, brushes and thinned acrylic paint make a large abstract stain-painting in one three hour session. Remember to use both saturated and thinned colours.

There is no pre-conceived plan or initial sketch for this painting. React to the image as it evolves. Work and then look and think about what you have done. Engage in the painting process and then contemplate the results and then engage again.

See paintings by: Helen Frankenthaler, Morris Louis and Sam Francis.

Part Two Destruction: Tear or cut the painting into pieces or cut out many shapes from the canvas creating large holes.

Part Three: Re-Creation: Collage the canvas back together again by any means you can think of. The canvas can have any irregular shape but it can’t remain a square or rectangle. Paint some final shapes or lines on the collaged canvas. The canvas must remain flat and not be turned into a soft, sculptural object.

Materials: Acrylic paint, canvas at least 4’x6’ or 3’x8”, plastic sheet, masking tape, rags, sponges, brushes or any other implement for depositing paint on the canvas that you think will work, a variety of large and small containers for water and mixing paint, scissors, and materials of your choice to collage the pieces back together i.e. glue, string, wire, etc

Project 2: Transformation – from Representation to Abstraction

This project asks you to think about the process of abstraction. To make abstract means that the artist goes through a process that moves from the ‘real’ world to her/his interpretation of that world. This may be through such means as: distortion, re-combining of seemingly unrelated elements, simplification or reduction.

Choose two images. These images can be similar or very different – that is up to you. However, they have to ‘mean’ something to you. How do you wish to combine these images – overlap, simplification, reduction, distortion? The final painting is a psychological, abstract impression. It does not depict the images or represent them but allows the viewer to ‘feel’ the images.

Studies: Three small – approx. 8”x10” pre-stretched, canvases. On these canvases experiment with different ways of combining these images with paint. The paint can be used in very expressionistic, impastoed ways, combined with mediums, gloss or matt, pearlized, florescent, etc; or the paint may be very thin, and used like stain, as in the first painting or a combination of both. Do not combine the images through photo-shop. This is a painting process, not a digital one.

Final Painting:

Reflecting on the small paintings but not trying to reproduce one, use the understanding you have gained through the small works to make one painting – at least 2’x3’ painting that has emerged from the beginning images.

Project 3: Mental Mapping - Interference through layering

Make at least ten ‘maps’ from memory of your journeys by subway, walking, or in a car, on sheets of clear acetate using markers of different colours. These drawings can include simplified images – i.e stars, rectangles for buildings, etc. (think of emoji). Experiment with layering the acetate drawings in different ways. You may wish to use all of the layers or only a few of them but you must use at least three.
Begin with painting a background on your canvas – this background may be a ‘hard-edge painting’, done with masking tape, or a stain painting, as in project #1. Using a selection of materials from acrylic paint, oil paint, oil stick, drawing materials including marker and any type of support other than acetate or other transparent materials, (canvas, wood panels, masonite, etc.) make a painting that incorporates interference through multiple layers to create the image. Through the background & the layers of mappings, try to convey the psychological ‘feeling’ of the journey, i.e. frantic, slow, calm, exciting, dangerous. The painting must be at least 3’x4’.

Class Schedule:

**Class 1:**
Introduction to the course and to one another.
Review of the course outline.
Discussion of painting materials and techniques.
*Introduction to Painting Project #1.*
*Please come to Class 2 with all of your painting materials ready to begin work!*

**Class 2:** Three hour intense painting session. Completion of the large stain painting.
Class viewing of the paintings.
Discussion of destruction and re-creation strategies

**Class 3:**
In-class workday. Individual consultations and critiques.
Destruction and re-creation phase.

**Class 4:**
In-class critiques Project One – three hours
Introduction to Project #2
Bring two images and the three small canvases to the next class

**Class 5:**
-Work on the three small canvases
-Individual consultations and critiques.
-Three small paintings to be completed for Class #6

**Reading Week: October 6-12, 2018. NO CLASSES**

**Class 6:**
-Class viewing / review of the three small paintings
-In-class workday on the final painting
-Individual consultations and critiques.

**Class 7:**
In-class workday. Individual consultations and critiques.

**Class 8:**
-In class critiques Project #2 – three hours
-Introduction to Project #3
-Come to the next class with the acetate drawings

Class 9:
-In-class workday on Project #3.
-Individual consultations and critiques.

Class 10:
-In-class workday on Project #3.
-Individual consultations and critiques.

Class 11:
-In-class workday on Project #3.
-Individual consultations and critiques.

Class 12:
Final Class Critique Painting Project # 3

LIST OF LEARNING OUTCOMES AND EXAMPLES OF
The purpose of this course is to further students' painting abilities and their understanding both of
contemporary painting and the conceptual ideas related to abstraction, primarily through studio projects, and
secondarily through class discussions, class critiques and presentations /viewing of works by artists who are
examining these themes in their work.

GRADED ASSESSMENT

Evaluation
Project 1: Metamorphosis: Creation, Destruction and Re-Creation. 25%
Project 2: Transformation: From Representation to Abstraction. 30%
Project 3: Mental Mapping: Interference through layering. 30%
Class Participation and Attendance 15%
Students will be expected to sign an attendance sheet at the beginning of each class. This mark is partially
determined by attendance. If you are not there you can’t participate. A good to very good grade is contingent
on how much and the quality of your participation. For example, how much you participate during crits, and
the quality of your comments. An excellent grade means that you are always there for the full class, you
speak frequently during crits and are fully enthusiastic and engaged with the course content.

Grading:
Grades will be assigned after the completion of each In-Class full critique. The grade will be numerical, i.e.
20/25 etc. not a B or B+, for example. At the completion of the course these grades will be added up and an
attendance grade assigned. The sum of these grades, converted to a letter grade will be your final grade.

Please Note:
The last day to drop this course without receiving a grade is: November 9, 2018.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION
Final course grades may be adjusted to conform to Program or Faculty grades distribution profiles.

**Grading, Assignment Submission, Lateness Penalties and Missed Tests**

**Grading:** The grading scheme for the course conforms to the 9-point grading system used in undergraduate programs at York (e.g., A+ = 9, A = 8, B+ = 7, C+ = 5, etc.). Assignments and tests* will bear either a letter grade designation or a corresponding number grade (e.g. A+ = 90 to 100, A = 80 to 90, B+ = 75 to 79, etc.)

(For a full description of York grading system see the York University Undergraduate Calendar - http://calendars.registrar.yorku.ca/pdfs/ug2004cal/calug04_5_acadinfo.pdf)

Students may take a limited number of courses for degree credit on an ungraded (pass/fail) basis. For full information on this option see Alternative Grading Option in the Faculty of Fine Arts section of the Undergraduate Calendar - http://calendars.registrar.yorku.ca/calendars/2010-2011/faculty_rules/FA/grading.htm

**Assignment Submission:** Proper academic performance depends on students doing their work not only well, but on time. Accordingly, assignments for this course must be received on the due date specified for the assignment. **Painting Studio Assignments are to be completed for the in class critique date to be reviewed and graded by the Course Instructors.**

**Additional Information**

As this is a studio painting course, students are expected to come to class with the appropriate painting materials / tools.

**IMPORTANT COURSE INFORMATION FOR STUDENTS**

All students are expected to familiarize themselves with the following information, available on the Senate Committee on Curriculum & Academic Standards webpage (see Reports, Initiatives, Documents) http://www.yorku.ca/secretariat/senate_cte_main_pages/ccas.htm

*Please note that this information is subject to periodic update. For the most current information, please go to the CCAS webpage (see Reports, Initiatives, Documents):* http://www.yorku.ca/secretariat/senate_cte_main_pages/ccas.htm

Many courses utilize Moodle, York University's course website system. If your course is using Moodle, click here to access it.

**Moodle @ York University**