

CET Syllabus of Record

Program: CET Photography at FAMU

Course Title: Fine Art Photography and Workshop

Course Code: PR/PHTO 230

Total Hours: 63

Recommended Credits: 3

Primary Discipline / Suggested Cross Listings: Photography / Studio Art

Language of Instruction: English

Prerequisites/Requirements: Previous experience in photography is required

Description

This course covers all forms of illustrative and self-expressive photography, from independent art to subjective or sociological documentary. Although the themes listed in the Course Outline below are essentially technical in nature, the course approaches them holistically, from philosophical, aesthetic and historical points of view. Each lecture starts with an analysis of images that represent previously-studied techniques. Some time is also devoted to a survey of works of Czech photographers and their relation to the movements in European/World photography.

The second part of each class (workshop: supervised lab time) comprises demonstrations and in-class assignments that help students improve not only their theoretical knowledge but also their practical skills. After basic skills are reviewed, the course leads students to an understanding of all kinds of photographic transformation: Pinhole camera, Changing of image tonality by dyeing and toning, Solarization, Kodalith, Cyanotype, Printing-out papers, Platinum and palladium print, Gum-bichromate, as well as Color processing and printing. The course also aims to explain basic questions of light construction, especially for portrait and studio still life shooting. A special seminar is devoted to lighting.

Objectives

Students develop a foundation in the history of photography and, specifically, Czech photography. All students improve their photographic skills, either technical or compositional, particularly in the areas listed above. Students produce a professional portfolio and gain experience making photo still for films.

Course Requirements

Students are expected to attend all sessions having completed all practical and reading assignments. Readings are assigned for some sessions only, but are of critical importance.

During the course, students complete the following:

A. Two creative-technical assignments:

- Designing principles of contrast and rhythm: linear and tonal solution – 4 images from the program trip to Český Krumlov

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B. Film stills:

- Documentation of current Prague Film Program: 10 to 15 images

C. Final project (students choose one of the following options):

- Illustrations of poetry or prose: either 8 to 10 images for an exhibition, or a model (dummy) of an original creative book
- Visualization of a musical composition: either 8 to 10 images for exhibition, or a slide show or any analog/digital form of presentation
- Collection of documentary images: either 15 to 20 images for an exhibition, or a model (dummy) of a book

Students must also submit a written explanation (3 to 6 pages) of the final thematic project. This paper serves as a basis for final critique, including evidence for final project choices. The paper must describe the process of creative decisions for the expression of the visual language of photography.

Finally, over the course of the term, students are required to meet with the instructor for at least two individual consultations (midterm critiques). These consultations are designed to review and critique plans and drafts of the final project. Students should bring to the meetings one or more of the following: sketches, contact sheets, working prints, model of a book, final object or installation, etc.

Students are expected to abide by CET's Attendance Policy.

Methods of Evaluation

The final grade is determined as follows:

- Creative-technical assignments 20%
- Midterm critiques 20%
- Final paper 10%
- Final project (with film stills included) 50%

Readings

Clarke, Graham: *The Photograph*. Publisher: Oxford University Press; ISBN: 0-19-284200-5; Issued: 1997.

Hirsch, Robert; Valentino, John: *Photographic Possibilities. The Expressive Use of Ideas, Materials and Processes*. Publisher: Focal Press; ISBN: 0-240-80362-0; Issued: 2001.

Rudman, Tim: *The Photographer's Master Printing Course*. Publisher: Focal Press; ISBN: 0-240-080457-0; Issued: 1999.

Mora, Gilles: *Photo Speak*. Publisher: Abbeville Press Publishers, New York, London and Paris; ISBN: 0 - 7892 - 0068 - 6 [paperback], 0 - 7892 - 0370 - 7 [cloth]; Issued: 1998.

Atkins, Robert: *Art Speak*. Publisher: Abbeville Press Publishers, New York, London and Paris; ISBN: 0 - 7892 - 0365 - 0; Issued: 1997.

Outline of Course Content

Note: Students cover approximately 1 topic every week.

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Topic 1: The Photograph as Fine Art

Light-tonal concepts: The role of determining exposure during image visualization; the Zone system and other systems of reading; the importance of controlling development in relation to the tonal make-up of the negative and final image; the use of special films; the characteristics of processing and printing developers, etc.

The Photographic Spirit of Prague – brief survey of Czech Master Photographers.

Topic 2: Darkroom Dynamics

The role of printing technologies in a creative process: making an archival print; monumental images, wallpapers, toning and dying, digital “darkroom” process.

František Drtikol and Jaroslav Rössler – from Symbolism to Modernism.

Topic 3: Illustrative Processes I:

The processes for visual illustration of poetry, prose and music; Solarization, Kodalith.

Josef Sudek and Jaromír Funke – Lyrics and Modernism.

Topic 4: Illustrative Processes II:

Infrared photography, liquid emulsion, transfer of instant photography, Xerox-techniques; Pinhole Camera – history, aesthetics and technical principles.

Karel Teige and Jindřich Štyrský – Pictorial Poems, Poeticism and Surrealism.

Topic 5: Alternative techniques I

Alternative printing processes: Cyanotype, Printing Out Papers, Platinum/Palladium Print.

Topic 6: Alternative techniques II: Gum Bichromate

Topic 7: Alternative techniques III – Rawlins Print and Bromoil

Topic 8: Absurdity of Reality and Reality of Absurd

Private documentary projects and Czech documentary photography in the context of general history of documentary photography. Free creative projects in the time of normalization.

Topic 9: Studio Lighting I

Basic principles of Studio Lighting for table-top photography and still life.

Topic 10: Studio Lighting II

Principles and principle systems of portrait studio lighting.

Topic 11: The Photography Book

Basic principles of graphic design and technical aspects of bookmaking in studio practice.

Topic 12: Building up a Portfolio

Photo finishing. Preparation for final presentation.