exploring action: performance art ARTS420 01

(3 credits)  
Prereq: ARTS 298 or permission of the instructor.

Spring 2020

Meeting Times TBA

Room: EHFA 124

Instructor Information:

Alexandra Knox

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Office Hours: EHFA 133, Mondays & Wednesdays 9:00-11:00 am

Final Exam: TBA

**course description**

This course explores contemporary art through action and the utilization of the body as a material, through both individual and collaborative assignments. This course is experimental in nature, and is open to a wide range of possibilities and interpretations of what is, or could be, “performance art”. The course also incorporates various literature, media and class discussions that assist the student in understanding performance art from a historical and contemporary perspective.

**required text**

*Performance Art: From Futurism to the Present* (Third Edition) by RoseLee Goldberg

*The Body in Contemporary Art* by Sally O’Reilly

**course objectives**

To examine, practice and gain an understanding of performance art from both contemporary and historical contexts. Students are expected to analyze works through discussion and critiques that incorporate action and/or the body and use this knowledge to inform their own performative pieces. Students will also learn how to apply the elements of art and design in a 4D setting that ultimately convey their concepts efficiently and effectively.

**student learning objectives**

* To develop a thorough understanding of the roots of performance art from a historical context, and the role it plays in a contemporary setting.
* To successfully apply critique language, vocabulary and methods to time-based methods of making.
* To create concept-driven individual and collaborative works that incorporate action and/or the body.
* To develop skills in the documentation of performances and video editing software.
* To successfully apply compositional elements in a performance based work.

**attendance policy**

Class attendance is absolutely critical in order to obtain successful completion of this course, especially during class discussions, lectures and critiques. We will follow the Department of Visual Arts attendance policy:

* You may have 3 unexcused absences without penalty. On the 4th and each subsequent unexcused absence, your final grade drops a letter grade.
* Arriving late or leaving early will count as a ⅓ of an absence.
* Absences on critique days double the penalty.
* More than 6 absences will result in failure of this course.
  + Exceptions *may* be made for documented excused absences, at the instructor’s discretion.

Please note that if you miss class, excused or not, it is *your* responsibility to catch up on materials, discussions and assignments. Missed classes do not absolve you of due dates or completing work in class.

**course requirements**

* **Performances:** Students will complete 3 well-crafted performances throughout the semester. Two of these pieces will be individual works, and a third will be collaborative.
* **Documentation**: Appropriate documentation is required for all performances and will be evaluated at the end of the semester.
* **Participation**: Students are expected to attend and participate in critiques of their peers and offer constructive criticism, both in final and in-progress critiques. Participation also includes discussions from assigned readings, as well as in-class exercises.

**evaluation & grades**

All project grades will be based on the following:

* Aesthetic Quality
* Quality of Concept
* Craftsmanship & Execution
* Effectiveness of Communication
* Effort

A 90-100 B+ 88-89 B 80-87 C+ 78-79 C 70-77 D+ 68-69 D 60-67 F 0-59

Your final grade will be calculated on the following:

* 75% 3 Performances
  + 2 Individual, 1 collaborative (25% each)
* 15% Quality of Documentation (photo and video)
* 10% Class Participation (exercises, readings, discussions, critiques)

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Coastal Carolina University is committed to providing reasonable accommodations for all persons with disabilities. If you are seeking classroom accommodations under the Americans with Disabilities Act, you are required to register with the Office of Accessibility and Disability Services. This office is located in Indigo House and the phone number is 843-349-2341. Please make an appointment with a staff member in Accessibility and Disability Services so that such accommodations can be considered. To receive academic accommodations for this class, please obtain the proper forms and meet with me to discuss the provisions of those accommodations as soon as possible.

The content in this syllabus is subject to change at any time at the discretion of the instructor.

assignment details

**portfolio assignments**

* Each student is expected to create 3 original performances that will “live” and be critiqued in a digital format.
* 2 of these performances will be individual, and one will be collaborative with another student in the class.
* For the two individual performances, you must utilize *at least* 2 of the following (1 in each):
  + Endurance-based
  + Object(s) or material(s) based
  + Public performance
  + Audience interactive
* We will have 3 in-progress critiques for each of the pieces. The in-progress critiques are as follows:
  + In-progress critique #1: idea discussion/sketches
  + In-progress critique #2: raw footage, pre-production
  + In-progress critique #3: first draft edit
* In-progress critiques may be viewed and discussed as a group or individually, depending on the needs of the class.
* Workdays are allotted throughout the semester. You may use this time how you see fit: you may edit footage in 108, discuss ideas, shoot footage, etc.
* Shooting footage: you may choose to do this on whatever device you want. Should you choose to utilize the equipment and talent of the Digital Studio department, it is **your responsibility to schedule dates, times and places to meet.** Do not wait until the last minute to ask a student for assistance or to schedule a time to shoot footage. Contact Michael DiGorgio at least **1 week in advance** of when you would like to shoot.
* The final iteration of each of your works will be due on Final Exam day (see calendar) via your YouTube channel. All finished pieces should have a title frame and be edited appropriately.

**performative exercises**

* Exercises are meant to act as “ice breakers” for what a performance is (or could be). They are meant to be fun and informative, and usually follow in the footsteps of an artist. Think of them as a “4D” sketchbook.
* **Erwin Wurm: 1 Minute Sculptures**
  + This assignment is taken directly from contemporary artist Erwin Wurm, who bridges the sculptural object and action in a simple yet elegant way.
  + Part 1: Come up with 5 “titles”. These should be on a printed document with your name, typed, double spaced, and numbered accordingly. You will trade documents with another student.
  + Part 2: Students will interpret each “title” and perform the action, and ultimately document with a hi-res digital photo. The piece lives as a photograph, so environment, lighting, etc should all be taken into account.
  + We will view the images as a group.
* **Collaborative Exercise: In the Style of Ulay & Abramovic**
  + In preparation for your collaborative performance, you are asked to recreate a piece done by Marina Abramovic & Ulay, one of the most notable collaborative groups of our time. You will be assigned a specific piece, and you are expected to research and read about that piece, and then recreate it with your partner. This includes documentation (photo and/or video), which we will view as a group. Please note: you are NOT required to be nude or put yourself in harm’s way for this assignment. Be creative when rethinking the original work.
  + *Imponderabilia*, 1977
  + *AAA-AAA,* 1978
  + *Rest Energy*, 1980
  + *Point of Contact*, 1980

**reading assignments**

* Reading assignments will be pulled from the book listed on the syllabus, *Performance Art: From Futurism to the Present* by RoseLee Goldberg (Third Edition). These readings are meant to aide in the historical and contemporary understanding of performance art, and to inform your pieces accordingly.
* You are expected to read the assigned passages and participate in a class discussion. The discussions will be relaxed; you may ask questions, state opinions, challenge ideas, etc.
  + Reading #1: Chapter 6: pg. 121 - 151
  + Reading #2: Chapter 7: pg. 152 - 184
  + Reading #3: Chapter 7: pg. 184 - 225
  + Reading #4: Chapter 8: pg. 226 - 249

**class schedule**

**T / Jan. 9th:** syllabus / introduction to Performance Art / Introduce Assignment #1: *1 Minute Sculptures* / Discuss Erwin Wurm / Introduce all Assignments for semester

**TH / Jan. 11th:**Discuss Youtube Channel / Part 1 of *1 Minute Sculptures* Due.

**T / Jan. 16th:** Assignment Due: *1 Minute Sculptures*

**TH / Jan. 18th:** In-Progress Crit #1 (Piece 1) / reading assignment #1

**T/ Jan. 23rd: DEMO DAY with Mike DiGorgio (room 108)**

**TH / Jan. 25th:** workday / reading discussion

**T / Jan. 30th:** work day / In-Progress Crit #2 (Piece 1)

**TH / Feb. 1st: Mike DiGorgio to help with editing questions (room 108)**

**T / Feb. 6th:** In-Progress Crit #3 (Piece 1) / work day

**TH / Feb. 8th:** Work day

**T / Feb. 13th:** In-Progress Crit #1 (2nd Piece) / reading assignment #2

**TH / Feb. 15th:** work day

**T / Feb. 20th:** work day / reading assignment discussion

**TH / Feb. 22nd:** work day

**T / Feb. 27th:** In-Progress Crit #2 (2nd Piece)

**TH / March 1st:**  Work day

**T / March 6th: SPRING BREAK**

**TH / March 8th: SPRING BREAK**

**T / March 13th:** In-Progress Crit #3 (Piece 2) / reading assignment #3

**TH / March 15th:** Collaborative Performance pairings & Exercise

**T / March 20th:** Collaborative assignment exercise due (documentation) / reading assignment discussion

**TH / March 22nd:** work day / In-Progress Crit #1 (Piece 3)

**T / March 27th:** work day

**TH / March 29th:** work day

**T / April 3rd:** In-progress Crit #2 (Piece 3) / work day

**TH / April 5th:** work day

**T / April 10th:** work day

**TH / April 12th:** In-Progress Crit #3 (Piece 3) / reading assignment #4

**T / April 17th:** work day / reading assignment discussion

**TH / April 19th:** work day

**T / April 24th:** work day

**TH / April 26: STUDY DAY, NO CLASS!**

**FINAL EXAM: Tuesday, May 1st 1:30 pm : All Final Works Due via Youtube channel**