ART 3307 Special Topics in Art
bricolage(assemblage)/mixedmedia
Fall 2015

Course Information

Title: Special Topics in Art, bricolage(assemblage)/mixedmedia
Course prefix and number: ART3307
CRN # 27883
Meeting times: M/W 4:30 pm – 7:20 pm
Required texts and materials: Tool and material requirements will be discussed on the first day of class. Generally students should be prepared to spend $150-250 for supplies.

Instructor Contact Information

Name: Alexander Keyes
Office: Fox Fine Arts 263 B
Office hours: M/T 1:00 pm – 2:00 pm
Email: askeyes@utep.edu

Instructor Introduction

Alexander Keyes holds a BA in Studio Art from The University of Puget Sound and an MFA from The University of Oregon. Currently he is visiting from the Pacific Northwest as Resident Artist at The University of Texas at El Paso. As an “emerging” artist he does whatever he can to make and show as much artwork as possible. He has shown in Washington, Oregon, Illinois, and Texas, as well as attended residencies in Norway and Portugal.

Course Description

This course is an upper division mixed-media class that incorporates a variety of materials and approaches. Basic techniques using wood, cardboard, paper, and other mixed media will be introduced and explored in a self guided, self initiated process. You will work through various different research approaches in an attempt to locate your individual voice within the contemporary art world. I hope that you approach this class with an open, willing, and engaging mind in order to challenge your notions of art making. Through a series of assignments and readings, culminating in a proposal based project, this class will be directed at investigating how to communicate your ideas through a visual medium.
This class will be split into three modules. We will begin with Material Study and Experimentation, where you will start to search for materials that interest you and experiment with the different approaches to using them as art. You will bring your new found material to start with Conceptualism and Research, where you will investigate why you are attracted to this material and gather a selection of contemporary artists that you believe work in the same direction as yourself. We will end a Body of Work that you create, following a line of inquiry that you can explain clearly and succinctly.

I will provide you with a loose conceptual framework to begin your projects, and you will be challenged to define, locate, and execute it through forms and ideas that are unique to your own sensibility. I will work individually with each of you during this process. Since part of the coursework for this class involves an investigation of issues and ideas in the field of contemporary art, these individual conversations should serve as a springboard for further looking, reading, and thinking on your part. This should all be recorded in your sketchbook as you move through the term and will count towards your final grade. This independent research will enhance and expand the ways in which each of you are able to articulate your unique voice.

**Structure**

The majority of our class time will be spent working in the studio, with a good deal of individual discussion. Periodically, slide presentations, group discussions, in-class workshops, and critiques will complement our studio assignments.

In addition to in-class work, you will have *daily homework* (sometimes assigned, sometimes independently structured) — expect at least 8 hours of work outside of class each week. Because continuity is so important to artistic practice, this daily work outside of class is crucial.

At the end of class, you are responsible for cleaning up your work area and returning supplies and tools.

**Course Objectives**

This course focuses on:

- You will experiment in expressing your ideas in a variety of different materials and construction approaches.
- While attempting to solve the projects and problems I give to you, I expect you to be doing independent research, spring boarding from the lectures and discussions we have in class.

**Course Outcomes**

Students who complete the course will be able to:

- You will cultivate a working knowledge of historical and contemporary art, learning to weave it into your own work and talk about it during critiques.
• This will enable you to address the development and meaning of your work in critical terms.

Assignments

Each assignment will be introduced via a presentation and detailed assignment sheet. Assignments must be submitted in a completed condition at the time of the project grading critique. Grades established for the primary project assignments will constitute 100% of the final grade for this course.

Schedule

Week 1 Jan 18-20
Introductions

Week 2 Jan 25-27
Make Collages

Week 3 Feb 1-3
Write Personal Timelines
Make 10 Moquettes

Week 4 Feb 8-10
Discuss reading

Week 5 Feb 15-17
10 Moquettes due

Week 6 Feb 22-24
Discuss reading

Week 7 Feb 29-Mar 2
3 Rules Due
No class Mar 2

Spring Break Mar 7-9

Week 8 Mar 14-16
Proposal due

Week 9 Mar 21-23
Discuss reading

Week 10 Mar 28-30
Source presentations
Week 11 Apr 4-6
In-process critiques

Week 12 Apr 11-13
Discuss reading

Week 13 Apr 18-20
Artist Statement examples due

Week 14 Apr 25-27
Artist Statements due

Week 15 May 2-4
Final Critiques
Bring copies of artist statement for entire class

**Evaluation**

All grades are calculated using percentages and converted into letter grades according to the following scale:

- 90% and above = A  Above and beyond, always working for the best
- 80% – 90% = B  Always trying, always making
- 70% – 80% = C  Average work
- 60% – 70% = D  Below average work
- Below 60% = F  Unsatisfactory work, failing

Project grades will be established by considering in class work and time at critique in the following manner:

**Attendance**
Because this is a studio course, being present, on time and ready to work is extremely important. I take unexcused absences seriously; they will affect your grade. If you must miss class, contact me ahead of time. The intensive work, discussions and one-on-one interactions of class cannot be made up in other ways. Missing five or more classes for any reason will result in a failing grade

**Preparation**
Coming to class prepared to work is essential. You should have all work in progress and all materials that you anticipate needing for the class period.

**Engagement**
Once you are here, I expect that you are focused and working hard for the entire session. Class is not the time for visiting with your friends. Your work will require your full attention and concentration. Cell phones and computers should be turned off. I understand and expect that your interests will be different. Regardless of your focus I will expect your engagement to be ambitious throughout the course and you will be evaluated with that in mind.
Progress

I am concerned with the distance you move between now and the end of the term. I realize that each of you come to this class with a different level of experience. You will be judged on your individual effort and development. If you are present, engaged and working to understand new ideas, progress will come naturally.

Critique Policy

The studio must be clean. Please take extra care to clean up around your projects (sweep, pick up debris, etc.). Work is due at the beginning of class on critique day. You should plan to arrive early if you anticipate needing extra set-up time. Your work will be counted late if it is not ready at the beginning of class. In short, I consider critiques to be an exercise in professionalism. Be on time, clean up, and present your work thoughtfully.

Initial Supply List

- Sketchbook (no smaller than 8” x 11”)
- Small x-acto knife
- Larger utility knife
- Metal Ruler, at least 18” in length
- Cutting Mat
- Drawing utensils

Course Guidelines

- Please prepare for studio days so that you are able to make good use of your time. You should have any supplies that you need for that day. You should not leave class to purchase additional materials.
- **You may not work with any tool or machine without having had a safety demonstration.**
- Each student is permitted 3 absences during the semester without penalty. Each absence after 3 will result in your final grade being dropped a letter. 3 times tardy will count as 1 absence.
- Do not come to class sick. Please email me before class starts to let me know you will not be there and seek medical care.
- Guests and children are not permitted in the studios during class.
- Communal music turned down low and agreed upon by the whole class is allowed during work time in the form of a boom box or music system. Head phones or personal music is not so that you are always engaging with your peers and participating in the learning process.
- Be mindful of the fact that equipment use is limited. I expect that you will use your time wisely and take advantage of the open studio hours outside of class.
• During studio days I will want to meet with each of you individually to discuss your ideas and your work. Be prepared with drawings and work in progress.
• Safety is the number one priority. You will be asked to leave class if you come with inappropriate attire or footwear. Please report immediately any tool or piece of equipment in need of repair. Do not use equipment that you have not been trained to use safely.
• The main studio may not be used when other classes are in session.
• The main studio is shared with other classes. This means that you may not store work in progress on the tables or floors. The last portion of class will be used for clean-up. If you wish to stay after class to continue working, you may do so after the studio has been restored to a clean and workable state. Leaving early before clean-up will count as an absence.
• Critiques in studio classes are equivalent to major exams. Participation is an expectation. We will review specific questions for each critique, but generally you should: be on time and be prepared to discuss, analyze, and raise questions. Missing the final critique may result in failure of the course.

Late Assignments, Make-up Work, and Exams

Your assignment grade will be reduced by one letter for each class day that it is late. There is no extra credit. Unless arranged beforehand, you will lose one half of your assignment grade for missing critiques.

University Policy Statements

Cheating/Plagiarism: Cheating is unethical and not acceptable. Plagiarism is using information or original wording in a paper without giving credit to the source of that information or wording: it is also not acceptable. Do not submit work under your name that you did not do yourself. You may not submit work for this class that you did for another class. If you are found to be cheating or plagiarizing, you will be subject to disciplinary action, per UTEP catalog policy. Refer to http://www.utep.edu/dos/acadintg.htm for further information.

Disabilities: I will make any reasonable accommodations for students with limitations due to disabilities, including learning disabilities. Please see me personally before or after class in the first two weeks or make an appointment, to discuss any special needs you might have. If you have a documented disability and require specific accommodations, you will need to contact the Disabled Student Services Office in the East Union Bldg., Room 106 within the first two weeks of classes. The Disabled Student Services Office can also be reached in the following ways:
Web: http://www.utep.edu/dss
Phone: 915-747-5148 Fax: 915-747-8712

Please feel free to discuss my expectations and evaluation at any time during the term if you have questions. I am available at all times by appointment.