

ART 4400 // Social Practice: An Introduction



Suzanne Lacy & Pilar Riaño Alcalá, *The Skin of Memory Revisited*, 2011

CSUB Art & Art History Dept.
Spring 2018
M/W 9:00–11:05am
Visual Arts 103

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Office Hours: LB 103
Monday 11:30-12pm / 2:30-4pm
Tuesday 9:30-10:30am
Wednesday 11:30-12pm / 2:30-4pm

Students are introduced to a variety of theoretical and philosophical approaches to social practice art making. The field is developing and professionalizing rapidly around institutions, both within and without art. But the field of practice is not new and has antecedents that go decades across the hemisphere. The San Joaquin Valley of Alta California has its own rich history. This course will have two components. The first is a **lecture and reading** section will be a large portion of the class. The lectures will be made up of case studies and the readings will be short essays I provide as well as the class textbook. The second is that you will also be asked to create a **research proposal** for work in the community. You will share this in class as your final exam and turn in the related digital documents. It will be based on the three intersecting corridors of action/reflection: Research / Network / Collaboration.

By the end of this course, students will be able to discuss community-based art practices through dialogically-driven research assignments in public space and through critical readings in class. Students should also be able to analyze socially engaged art from multiple points of view and speak about different theoretical perspectives. Pre-requisite: art major with upper division standing. Satisfactory completion of any two (2) 3000-level Studio courses and ART 4000.

It is expected that students attend all classes as information will be presented that is not in the texts, take thorough notes, participate in class discussions and complete the required reading and assignments as listed in the syllabus. It is imperative that you stay current with the reading and videos as the class will be moving very quickly. Because our time is limited in class, students will have to work on assignments outside of class and work collaboratively with peers. Students will need to complete two exams (Mid-term and Final) and their research proposal using assigned readings and lectures.

Please be aware that some of the content we will be discussing in class may provoke strong emotions and may make you uncomfortable. Art is inherently challenging to our faculties and we must be open to that which questions our understanding of things. Part of the purpose of this class is to create a space where we can have an open, equal and honest exchange of ideas – we must be mindful that, even when disagreeing with classmates, one needs to always be respectful of differing opinions. Please feel free to stop by my office during office hours. If you are experiencing a personal issue that is affecting your ability to do well in the course, please come talk to me – it is best to discuss these things early. Do not wait for a failing grade.

REQUIRED TEXTBOOK

- Pablo Helguera. *Education for Socially Engaged Art: A Materials and Techniques Handbook*, (Jorge Pinto Books, 2011).

Students must plan to have the textbook by the second week of class. It is available online, including Amazon.com. Please speak with me if you are having difficulty obtaining a copy.

RECOMMENDED TEXTS

(for students interested in pursuing topics in greater depth)

- Grant Kester, *Conversation Pieces: Community and Communication in Modern Art*, (University of California Press 2013).
- Bill Kelley Jr., Grant Kester, eds. *Collective Situations: Readings in Contemporary Latin American Art, 1995-2010*, (Duke University Press, 2017).
- Suzanne Lacy, *Mapping the Terrain: New Genre Public Art*, (Bay Press, 1994).
- Johanna Burton, Shannon Jackson, Dominic Willson, eds. *Public Servants: Art and the Crisis of the Common Good*, (MIT Press 2016).

GRADE BREAKDOWN

25% - Midterm	A+: 100-98	A: 97-93	A-: 92-90
25% - Final	B+: 89-88	B: 87-83	B-: 82-80
35% - Proposal Project	C+: 79-78	C: 77-73	C-: 72-70
15% - Participation	D+: 69-68	D: 67-63	D-: 62-60
	F/I: 59 and below		

ATTENDANCE & PARTICIPATION

Your participation grade is a combination of attendance at visiting artist talks, contributions to class discussions, group work, and pop quizzes. It is expected that students attend all classes as information will be presented that is not in the texts. Regular attendance is key as there will be a great deal of material covered in class that is not in the textbook. Two classes can be missed without an excuse. Every absence after two will cause one point to be deducted from your final grade. Habitual tardiness will also affect your final grade (each late arrival after two will count as half an absence). If you are absent for a family emergency or extended illness, please come talk to me to arrange for work to make up the material missed.

EXAMS

The two exams will not be cumulative. There will be a class prior to each exam where we review the material and students are encouraged to study together outside of class. Missed exams will count as an "F" unless the student has a valid excuse, cleared in advance, in which case a make-up exam will be arranged. Blue books are required.

- **Midterm Exam: Wed. 3/14 // Midterm Proposal Presentation: Wed. 3/21**
- **Final Exam: Wed, 5/9 // Proposal Presentation: Wed. 5/16 (8-10:30am)**

POP QUIZZES

There will be periodic pop quizzes given in class based on the reading material most recently assigned or lecture material most recently presented in class. These will count as part of your participation grade.

VISITING ARTIST TALK REQUIREMENT

As part of your participation in this class you are required to go to one visiting artist talk this fall semester (if you're unable to go to any of these talks, please let me know as soon as possible to arrange an alternative assignment). You will have to turn in a 250-word summary of the topics covered.

ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATIONS

If you have any needs or require accommodations related to a disability or learning difference, please contact the Office of Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD). You can reach them by calling 661-654-3360 / TDD 661-654-6288 or visiting SADM 140. Once you have your accommodations letter, please schedule a time to meet with me during office hours to coordinate your accommodations.

RESPECT FOR THE CLASSROOM ENVIRONMENT

Please show courtesy to your peers and instructor through:

- Coming to class on time and not leaving early. If you must, please let me know in advance and sit by the door to minimize disruptions.
- Putting laptops and tablets away during class (unless approved for academic accommodations).
- Turning off or silencing cell phones and not text messaging.
- Refraining from carrying on private conversations, passing notes, or sleeping in class.

LAPTOPS, TABLETS & EMAIL

While laptops and tablets can be useful in many situations, they are often distracting in class (to yourself and others around you). With this in mind, they are not to be used in class except in the case of an academic accommodation. There will be studio time in which these will be acceptable. Please do not have them out during lecture or discussion. Please also check your CSUB email regularly, at least once a day, as faculty use it to communicate important information about class and assignments. The instructor will only check his CSUB email during working hours (M-F 8am-6pm).

LATE ASSIGNMENTS & PLAGIARISM

Late assignments and exams will not be accepted unless prior arrangements are made (i.e. a legitimate, justifiable reason is needed for me to consider granting a student extra time, so plan ahead and budget your time) or if you have a justifiable illness with a doctor's letter. If you have an excused absence and your assignment is late, send it to me as an e-mail attachment as soon as it is complete and then check with me to see if you need to follow up with a hard copy. It is your responsibility to follow up when an assignment is late.

Always be careful about plagiarism. Plagiarism is the use of another person's ideas or words without proper acknowledgement. Two of the most common forms of plagiarism are defined by Diana Hacker in *The Bedford Handbook for Writers* (1994) as: "1) borrowing someone's ideas, information, or language without documenting the source and 2) documenting the source but paraphrasing the source's language too closely, without using quotation marks to indicate that language has been borrowed" (477). The instructor regularly checks to see if material has been plagiarized. Please ask me if you are unsure of when should you document a source (see Hacker 477-78) or what is meant by paraphrasing too closely (Hacker 467-79) and read CSUB's statement on Academic Integrity: <http://www.csub.edu/osrr/academic%20integrity>

SCHEDULE

Please note, changes may be made to the schedule if necessary and will be announced at the beginning of class

❖ WEEK 1

- 1/22 - Introduction to the class
 - COVER: Class syllabus and course Research Proposal
- 1/24 – What is Social Practice? Lecture and in-depth review of Research Proposal
 - READ:
 - Helguera, Ch. 1: *Definitions* (pp. 1-8)

❖ WEEK 2

- 1/29 – A review of Happenings and other historical case studies
 - READ:
 - Helguera, Ch. 2: *Community* (pp. 9-25)
- 1/31 – Research / Network / Collaboration: Informal 1st draft proposal exchange
 - UPDATE: An informal presentation of a local site/community you find interesting that could serve a basis for your project.
 - READ:
 - Helguera, Ch. 2: *Community* (pp. 9-25)

❖ WEEK 3

- 2/5 – Case Study: *La Piel de la Memoria* (The Skin of Memory) by Suzanne Lacy and Pilar Riaño Alcalá (Medellín, 1998 & 2011)
 - READ:
 - “Skins of Memory: Art, Civic Pedagogy, and Social Reconstruction” by Suzanne Lacy and Pilar Riaño Alcalá in *Collective Situations*. (PDF online)
 - WATCH:
 - Project videos: <https://tinyurl.com/y853yoeg> & <https://tinyurl.com/ybl4a7f3>
- 2/7 – Visiting artist: Teresa Flores (Fresno/Los Angeles)
 - Teresa will visit us twice and share her ongoing project on the politics of water in the Central Valley. You are welcome to volunteer in her project.

❖ WEEK 4

- 2/12 – What is the difference between social practice and social work?
 - READ:
 - Helguera, Ch. 3: *Situations* (pp. 27-38)
- 2/14 – Research / Network / Collaboration: Semi-formal 2nd draft proposal exchange
 - UPDATE: A more formal presentation of the materials you have researched and contacts made so far in your local site/community.

❖ WEEK 5

- 2/19 – Paulo Freire: Pedagogy and Dialogue
 - READ:
 - “Paulo Freire: Discussing Dialogue” by Tom Finkelpearl in *Dialogues in Public Art* (MIT Press, 2000). (PDF online)
- 2/21 - Visiting artist: Teresa Flores (Fresno/Los Angeles)
 - Teresa will visit us twice and share her ongoing project on the politics of water in the Central Valley.
 - Continue discussing Freire essay.

❖ WEEK 6

- 2/26 – Dialogue as a methodology
 - READ:
 - Helguera, Ch. 4: *Conversation* (pp. 39-49)
 - Research Proposal Studio time and Feedback.
- 2/28 – Research Proposal Studio time and Feedback
 - On days cited as Studio Time, bring your materials to work in class for feedback.

❖ WEEK 7

- 3/5 – Collaboration and its challenges to authorship.
 - READ:
 - Helguera, Ch. 5: *Collaboration* (pp. 51-57)
- 3/7 – Case Study: Alfadir Luna, the La Merced market, and *El Señor de Maíz*
 - READ:
 - Liz Goldner, “Corn Man: A Mexican-Inspired Animistic Sculpture Arrives in Santa Ana and Los Angeles” in *KCET ArtBound*: <https://tinyurl.com/ybf66j95>
 - WATCH:
 - Alfadir Luna, *Procesión para unir el Señor de Maíz*, 2011. <https://tinyurl.com/y873klwc>

❖ WEEK 8

- 3/12 – Exam Review and Research Proposal studio time and feedback.
- 3/14 – MIDTERM Written Exam

❖ WEEK 9

- 3/19 – Antagonism, provocation and art making
 - READ:
 - Helguera, Ch. 6: *Antagonism* (pp. 59-65)
 - WATCH:
 - The Yes Men, *The Yes Men Fix the World*, 2009. (1 hr. 35 min) <https://vimeo.com/130013994>
- 3/21 – MIDTERM Proposal Presentations

❖ **WEEK 10:** SPRING BREAK: March 26-30

❖ **WEEK 11**

- 4/2 – No Class. Performance and public spaces
 - WATCH:
 - Frente 3 de Fevereiro, *Zumbi Somos Nos*, 2007 (51 min.)
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9g7m12ixqjM>
 - Francis Alÿs, *When Faith Moves Mountains*, 2002 (15 min.)
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4eNuqLnFaYA>
- 4/4 – Performance and public spaces
 - READ:
 - Helguera, Ch. 7: *Performance* (pp. 67-71)

❖ **WEEK 12**

- 4/9 – Research Proposal Studio time and Feedback
 - On days cited as Studio Time, bring your materials to work in class for feedback.
- 4/11 – Documentation: The residue of action or new art?
 - READ:
 - Helguera, Ch. 8: *Documentation* (pp. 73-76)

❖ **WEEK 13**

- 4/16 – Research / Network / Collaboration: Semi-formal 4th draft proposal exchange
 - UPDATE: A semi-formal presentation of the materials you have researched, contacts established and methods proposed in your local site/community.
- 4/18 - Transpedagogy or Extra-Disciplinarity, working outside the canon.
 - READ:
 - Helguera, Ch. 9: *Transpedagogy* (pp. 77-81)
 - Helguera, Ch. 10: *Deskilling* (pp. 83-88)

❖ **WEEK 14**

- 4/23 – CASE STUDY: *The Gentrification Library*, by Ultra-red & School of Echoes, 2017
 - READ:
 - Carribean Fragoza, “Art and Complicity: How the Fight Against Gentrification in Boyle Heights Questions the Role of Artists” *ArtBound*, 2016. <https://tinyurl.com/y6v78w2h>
 - WATCH:
 - City Rising (Broadcast Episode), KCET, 2017.
<https://www.kcet.org/shows/city-rising/city-rising-broadcast-episode>
 - School of Echoes, *Boyle Heights Mariachi Rent Strike*, 2017.
<https://tinyurl.com/y853a59v>
- 4/25 – Research Proposal Studio time and Feedback
 - On days cited as Studio Time, bring your materials to work in class for feedback.

❖ **WEEK 15**

- 4/30 – Research Proposal Studio time and Feedback
 - On days cited as Studio Time, bring your materials to work in class for feedback.
- 5/2 – Research Proposal Studio time and Feedback
 - On days cited as Studio Time, bring your materials to work in class for feedback.

❖ **WEEK 16**

- 5/7 – Exam Review
 - Come with questions.
- 5/9 – **Final Exam** (written exam)
 - Bring a Blue Book.

❖ **FINAL EXAM** (Research Proposal presentations)

- 5/16 – 10 minute presentations, 8:00-10:30am
 - Presentations using PowerPoint and/or video or other visual aids. You will be asked to turn in all your materials as a packaged visual proposal