

UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY
DEPARTMENT OF ART

UNDERGRADUATE COURSE OUTLINE

**Art (ART) 311 Lecture 02
Topics in Art**

"Art of the Soul: Creative Process as Spiritual Practice"

**Spring 2017, May 15 - June 2
M, W; 09:00 - 14:45; AB 673**

Instructor: *Chelsea Rushton*

Office *AB 647*

Office Phone: *N.A.*

E-Mail: crlrushto@gmail.com

Web Page: www.chelsearushton.com

Office Hours: *By Appointment Only*

Course Description

Topics in art may include art appreciation, art and everyday life, and themes in art history.

Note: *This lecture course will survey the work of a number of artists in the Western canon (between the late 1800s and the present) who engage or have engaged in art-making processes as a method of self-inquiry and spiritual practice. We will look at how two- and three-dimensional art objects can function doubly as sacred or ritual objects, as well as how time-based and performance art rooted in ritual or ceremony can transform an environment to create sacred space. Study of the artists will be supported with an exploration of the theoretical literature that contextualizes their work.*

Prerequisites &/or Co-requisites

None.

Objectives of the Course

Students will complete this course with a foundational knowledge of spiritual traditions in 20th century art that continue to inform contemporary practice. In addition, they will contribute their ideas to small and large group discussions in a safe environment, and engage different methods of meditation to advance their experiential understanding of the creative process as a method of both visual thinking and spiritual inquiry.

Textbooks and Readings

REQUIRED READINGS

1. Spretnak, Charlene. "Introduction: The Great Underground River That Flows Through Modern Art." *The Spiritual Dynamic in Modern Art: Art History Reconsidered, 1800 to the Present*. New York: Palgrave McMillan, 2014.

2. Flam, Jack. "Matisse and the Metaphysics of Decoration." *Dressstudy* Vol. 59, Spring 2011.
3. Vallega, Alejandro A. "Paul Klee's Originary Painting." *Research in Phenomenology* 43, 2013, 462-474.
4. Kane, Paul. "Inner Landscapes as Sacred Landscapes." *The Kenyon Review*, The New Series, Vol. 25, No. 3/4. Autumn 2003.
5. Gablik, Suzi. "Learning to Dream: The Remythologizing of Consciousness." *The Reenchantment of Art*. London: Thames and Hudson, 1991.

RECOMMENDED (OPTIONAL) READINGS

***This list is by no means exhaustive, but it will get you off to a good start if you are interested in reading further in the field of modern and contemporary art and spirituality.**

Books

Beauregard, Mario and Denyse O'Leary. *The Spiritual Brain: A Neuroscientist's Case for the Existence of the Soul*. New York: HarperCollins, 2007.

Elkins, James. *On the Strange Place of Religion in Contemporary Art*. New York: Routledge, 2004.

Gablik, Suzi. *The Reenchantment of Art*. London: Thames and Hudson, 1991.

Mayer, Elizabeth Lloyd. *Extraordinary Knowing: Science, Skepticism, and the Inexplicable Powers of the Human Mind*. New York: Bantam Books, 2007.

Spretnak, Charlene. *The Spiritual Dynamic in Modern Art: Art History Reconsidered, 1800 to the Present*. New York, Palgrave McMillan, 2014.

Tuchman, Maurice. *The Spiritual in Art: Abstract Painting 1890-1985*. Los Angeles: Los Angeles County Museum of Art, and New York: Abbeville Press, Inc., 1986.

Tucker, Michael. *Dreaming with Open Eyes: The Shamanic Spirit in 20th Century Art and Culture*. New York: HarperCollins, 1992.

Articles and Book Chapters

Clemen, Carl. "Anthroposophy." *The Journal of Religion*, Vol. 4, No. 3, 1924.

Erzen, Jale Nejdet. "Islamic Aesthetics: An Alternative Way to Knowledge." *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*. Vol. 65, No. 1. Winter 2007.

Fischer, Kathleen. "Long Life on a Fragile Planet: Nature, Spirituality, and Aging." *Journal of Religion, Spirituality, and Aging*. Vol. 23, Issue 3. May 2011.

Kurbanovsky, Alexi. "Malevich's Mystic Signs: From Iconoclasm to New Theology." *Sacred Stories: Religion and Spirituality in Modern Russia*. Indiana University Press, 2007.

Lawlor, Robert. "The Practice of Geometry"; "Sacred Geometry: Metaphor of Universal Order." *Sacred Geometry: Philosophy and Practice*. London: Thames & Hudson, 1982.

Martin, Agnes. 1973. "On the Perfection Underlying Life." Lecture originally given at the ICA on February 14, 1973 on the occasion of the exhibition, *Agnes Martin*, which was held at the Institute of Contemporary Art at the University of Pennsylvania, January 22 – March 1, 1973.

Martin, Paul C. "The Colourful Depictions of God in Mystical Consciousness." *Spiritus: A Journal of Christian Spirituality*. Vol. 14, No. 1, Spring 2014.

Pickstone, Charles. "A Theology of Abstraction: Wassily Kandinsky's 'Concerning the Spiritual in Art'". *Theology*, Volume 114, No. 32, 2011.

Stoeber, Michael. "Theosophical Influences on the Painting and Writing of Lawren Harris: Re-Imagining Theosophy Through Canadian Art." *Toronto Journal of Theology*, Vol. 28, No. 1. Spring 2012.

Assignments and Evaluation

PARTICIPATION (READING RESPONSES AND ATTENDANCE): 20%

Students will be assigned FIVE readings (as listed above in REQUIRED READINGS) during the course (approximately one per class). Participation will be measured by a two-part engagement with these readings, which will each be worth 4% of the final grade:

2%: 200-300 word written response, to be submitted by email or in hard copy at the beginning of class on the day of the reading discussion.

2%: presence in class for group discussion of the reading.

Please note: There is no right or wrong way to respond in writing to the readings. You will not be graded on 'correctness', only on the completion of your response. Also note that this is NOT a summary of the reading; it is a RESPONSE to it. I want to see that you are engaging with the material and *thinking* about the material. Likewise, in class discussions, you will not be graded on whether what you say is 'correct'; your grade is based on how you bring your written ideas into a conversation to stimulate more ideas.

TENTATIVE READING DISCUSSION DATES (SUBJECT TO CHANGE)

*Monday May 15: The Great Underground River that Flows Through Modern Art (***to be discussed on the first day of class***)

Wednesday May 17: Matisse and the Metaphysics of Decoration

Wednesday May 24: Paul Klee's Originary Painting

Monday May 29: Inner Landscapes as Sacred Landscapes

Wednesday May 31: Learning to Dream: Remythologizing Consciousness

CONTEMPORARY ART SLEUTH PRESENTATIONS ON MAY 31: 20%

The foundations of this course can be found in the 20th century, however, the work by 20th century artists who explored spiritual questions in their practice informs and encourages the work of contemporary artists all over the world. New methods of information sharing, including online and digital publishing platforms and social media, enable artists to make themselves more visible and searchable to audiences than ever before.

In groups of 3-5 (depending on class size), students will find and research the work of one contemporary artist or collective—an artist or group of artists working and exhibiting today—by searching available resources, including but not limited to: contemporary art magazines and newspapers; museum, gallery, and artist websites; and social media platforms such as Instagram, Tumblr, and Ello.

Each group will prepare one 10-15 minute slideshow presentation to introduce the class to the artist or collective they have chosen. **Presentations should discuss the background of the artists,**

professional spotlights (including publications, residencies and exhibitions), the themes they take up in their work, and how the medium/media they work with supports those themes.
ARTISTS SELECTED AND APPROVED BY INSTRUCTOR (VIA EMAIL) ON OR BEFORE MAY 22.
SLIDESHOW AND SPEAKING NOTES DUE TO INSTRUCTOR ON MAY 29, 4:00 PM.
CLASS PRESENTATIONS ON MAY 31.

REFLECTION JOURNAL / SKETCHBOOK, DUE WEDNESDAY, MAY 31: **20%**

Information comes to us through the processes of meditation and reflection that we would not otherwise receive through our conscious thinking. The last period of each class will be reserved for meditation and reflection for exactly this reason. Except in the event of Course Activities, we will spend approximately 20 minutes in meditation (or in a meditative activity), and then students will be given the remainder of each session for unstructured studio time to reflect in a journal or sketchbook on what may have arisen through the meditation or throughout the day. If a course activity does not permit time students to reflect in class, reflections must be completed as homework. The journal or sketchbook will be graded not on content but on completion, i.e., a visible engagement with the practice each day. Drawing, painting, prose, poetry, bullet notes, lists, and diagrams are just some of the ways students might choose to record and expand ideas and insights.

FINAL IN-CLASS QUIZ, WEDNESDAY, MAY 31: **10%**

This quiz, written in the last period of class, will be comprised of three sections, with multiple choice, matching, and short answer questions that take up material from the lectures and readings.

CREATIVE ESSAY / PROJECT, DUE FRIDAY, JUNE 2: **30%**

(DROP OFF IN INSTRUCTOR'S OFFICE BETWEEN 9:00 AM - 4:00 PM)

Choose ONE of the following two options:

1. Essay: Write a 2,000-2,500 word essay on a topic of your choice that contributes to the course content. Your topic can be a further elaboration of material we have covered in class, or an exploration of something the course has not covered, but is relevant to it.
2. Creative Project: Create a piece of art in any medium, accompanied by a 200-300 word artist statement that demonstrates engagement with course content.

ALL TOPICS TO BE APPROVED IN ADVANCE BY THE INSTRUCTOR.

DETAILS REGARDING ASSIGNMENT GRADING SCHEME WILL BE MADE AVAILABLE IN CLASS AND ON D2L.

Writing

Students will be graded on the quality of writing ONLY in the instance of the final essay or creative project. Details of grading criteria are elaborated in student-led grading rubrics, which will be made available to students in class.

It is not necessary to achieve a passing grade on any particular component of the course in order for the student to pass the course as a whole.

Registrar-Scheduled Final Exam – NO

Note: It is the student's responsibility to keep a copy of or any relevant documentation regarding each submitted assignment.

Please hand in your assignments directly to your instructor. If this is not possible, you can use the drop box outside of AB 608. Assignments that are put into the drop box will be date-stamped and placed in the instructor's mailbox.

Late Assignment Policy

Reading responses: Must be submitted in hard copy at the beginning of class on the day that the reading is being discussed. In the event of illness, you may submit your reading response by email IN ADVANCE of class start time to receive the completion grade for the written component (2%).

Contemporary Art Slideshow: Slideshows and speaking notes submitted late to the instructor will result in a deduction from the final assignment grade of 5% per student, per day, to a maximum of two days, or 10% per student. Slideshows not prepared in time to present to the class will result in a final assignment grade of 0 for all students in the group.

Creative Essay / Project: Late assignments will be deducted 5% per day; weekends count as two days.

Additional Information and Course-Related Costs

Students will be required to keep a journal or sketchbook throughout the course; they can make or buy one as they choose.

If students make ouija boards and/or pendulums (see course activities below), they will be required either to bring their own supplies, or to contribute \$20 per activity to the cost of supplies, provided by the instructor.

Course Activities

During the Meditation and Reflection period of class on Monday, May 15, students and the instructor will visit *Mind the Gap*, the 2017 Department of Art BFA exhibition. Students will engage with the works of art as a contemplative/meditative activity before reflecting in their journals or sketchbooks.

During the Meditation and Reflection period of class on Wednesday, May 17, students and the instructor will create a temporary walkable labyrinth on the Art Parkade's 6th floor elevator and stair platform, which is the entrance to and exit from the Art Department. The labyrinth, applied to the floor with electrical tape, will encourage the contemplative use of a space normally used only for transit. The labyrinth will be used by students for Meditation and Reflection on May 17, and can be used for Meditation and Reflection on any class thereafter.

On Monday, May 29, students have the opportunity to participate in optional non-graded, practical workshops to make and learn the fundamental principles of Ouija boards, used by Hilma af Klint and The Five, and pendulums, the tool Emma Kunz used to plot all of her compositions before drawing them. The workshops will be held in the last portion of class (1:45 - 2:45 p.m.). If any students do not wish to participate, they will not be required to stay for the last portion; however, they must notify the instructor via email by Friday, May 26, at 12:00 pm, that they will be absent. They will also still be responsible for producing a reflection entry on that day in their sketchbooks/journals.

Art of the Soul students have an opportunity to participate in a class exhibition of final creative projects in the Art Department's Little Gallery, from June 5-9. This is an optional, non-graded course component; however, students are strongly encouraged to include their work to learn about what is involved in exhibiting a work of art. Students who would like to volunteer their efforts toward this exhibition will be welcome to do so in the capacities of poster design, poster distribution, install, de-install, reception, and documentation.

Grading Method/Grading Scale:

Percentage	Grade	G.P.V.	Grade Definition
96-100	A+	4.0	Outstanding
90-95	A	4.0	Excellent-superior performance, showing comprehensive understanding of subject matter.
85-89	A-	3.7	
80-84	B+	3.3	
75-79	B	3.0	Good – clearly above average performance with knowledge of subject matter generally complete.
70-74	B-	2.7	
65-69	C+	2.3	
60-64	C	2.0	Satisfactory – basic understanding of the subject matter.
55-59	C-	1.7	
53-54	D+	1.3	
50-52	D	1.0	Minimal pass – marginal performance; generally insufficient preparation for subsequent courses in the same subject.
0-49	F	0	Fail – unsatisfactory performance or failure to meet course requirements.

Studio Procedures

The creation of art can be a dirty process and a studio is only workable if everyone cooperates in keeping it clean. Out of respect and consideration for your classmates and other users of the space, it is expected that everyone will participate in keeping the studio clean and tidy.

Internet and Electronic Communication Device Information

Electronic devices may be used in class ONLY for the purpose of engaging with course material (note taking, web searching, etc.). If devices distract students from session proceedings, they will be confiscated until the end of the class.

Academic Accommodation

Students seeking an accommodation based on disability or medical concerns should contact Student Accessibility Services (S.A.S.); S.A.S. will process the request and issue letters of accommodation to instructors. For additional information on support services and accommodations for students with disabilities, visit www.ucalgary.ca/access/

Students who require an accommodation in relation to their coursework based on a protected ground other than disability should communicate this need in writing to their Instructor.

The full policy on Student Accommodations is available at
<http://www.ucalgary.ca/access/accommodations/policy>

Academic Standing

For more information go to <http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/f.html>

Deferral of Exams/Term work

It is possible to request a deferral of term work or final examination(s) for reasons of illness, accident, family or domestic affliction, or religious obligations. Please check with Enrolment Services if any of these issues make it impossible for you to sit an exam or finish term work by stated deadlines.

For more information about deferring a final exam go to
<https://www.ucalgary.ca/registrar/exams/deferred-exams>

For more information about the deferral term work go to
<http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/g-7.html>
http://www.ucalgary.ca/registrar/files/registrar/deferred_termwork15.pdf

F.O.I.P.

For more information go to <http://www.ucalgary.ca/secretariat/privacy>

Writing/Plagiarism

Writing skills are not exclusive to English courses and, in fact, should cross all disciplines. The University supports the belief that throughout their University careers, students should be taught how to write well so that when they graduate their writing abilities will be far above the minimal standards required at entrance. Consistent with this belief, students are expected to do a substantial amount of writing in their University courses and, where appropriate, members of faculty can and should use writing and the grading thereof as a factor in the evaluation of student work. The services provided by the Writing Support Services can be utilized by all undergraduate and graduate students who feel they require further assistance.

For more information go to <http://www.ucalgary.ca/ssc/writing-support> or
<http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/e-2.html>

Using any source whatsoever without clearly documenting it is a serious academic offense. Consequences include failure on the assignment, failure in the course and possibly suspension or expulsion from the university. Visual art projects submitted for course credit must be produced by the student specifically for this class. Students must not submit projects if credit has or will be provided for it in another class. This includes re-worked assignments from previous or concurrent courses, unless permission is provided in writing by the instructor. Additionally, the student is asked to be mindful of using visual sources from the internet, ensuring that that material is not derived from any on-line or other available source, and that appropriate copyright permission is granted, when required.

For more information go to
<http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/k-2-1.html>

Student Misconduct

For more information go to <http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/k.html>

Student Union

For more information go to <http://www.su.ucalgary.ca/>

Student Ombudsman

For more information go to <http://www.ucalgary.ca/provost/students/ombuds>

Lockers

The Art Building lockers are administered through the Student's Union's used bookstore, Bound and Copied. Lockers are rented on a first come, first served basis. Due to the shortage of lockers, and the high demand, students cannot hold more than one locker at a time. All of the details on renting a locker and your responsibilities can be found on the Locker Rental Agreement at

https://www.su.ucalgary.ca/wp-content/uploads/2014/08/locker_rental_agreement_2010.pdf

Lockers for all sessions can be rented through my.ucalgary.ca. Once you're in the Student Centre, click on **Other Academic Services** and choose **Locker Reservation**.

Lockers must be vacated by the end of term.

For more information go to <http://www.su.ucalgary.ca/>

Models

In this class students may be expected to draw from nude models. **A student electing not to do so must notify the instructors IN WRITING of his/her concerns.**

Portfolios and Assignments

The Department of Art will not assume responsibility for lost or stolen portfolios or course work given to instructors for grading, or for work posted on bulletin boards in the art building.

Note - All unclaimed work will be disposed of.

Note - Studio spaces, bulletin boards and display areas need to be cleared two weeks after the last day of classes.

Ethics

Whenever you perform research with human participants (i.e., surveys, interviews or observation) as part of your university studies, you are responsible for following university research ethics guidelines. Your instructor must review and approve of your research plans and supervise your research.

For more information go to <http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/e-5.html>

or

<https://www.ucalgary.ca/research/researchers/ethics-compliance/chreb>

Campus Security/Safewalk

Call 220-5333 anytime. Help phones are located throughout campus, parking lots and elevators; they connect directly to Campus Security - in case of emergency, press the red button.

For more information go to <http://www.ucalgary.ca/security/safewalk>

Emergency Evacuation

For more information go to <http://www.ucalgary.ca/emergencyplan/assemblypoints>

Faculty of Arts Program Advising and Student Information Resources

Have a question but not sure where to start? The Arts Students' Centre is your information resource for everything in the Faculty of Arts. Stop by SS102, call us at 220-3580 or email us at ascarts@ucalgary.ca or artsads@ucalgary.ca. You can also visit the Faculty of Arts website at <http://arts.ucalgary.ca/undergraduate> which has detailed information on common academic concerns.

For program planning and advice, contact the Student Success Centre at 220-5881 or visit them on the 3rd floor of the Taylor Family Digital Library.

For registration (add/drop/swap), paying fees and assistance with your Student Centre, contact Enrolment Services at 210-ROCK [7625] or visit them at the MacKimmie Library Block.