

UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY  
DEPARTMENT OF ART

**COURSE OUTLINE**

**Art (ART) 311 - Lecture 02**

**Topics in Art**

**“Art of the Soul: Creative Process as Spiritual Practice”**

**Spring 2016, May 9 - June 8**

Lecture: M,W 09:00-14:20; AB 673

(Please note, there will be no class from May 26 to June 5 during the Congress of the Humanities and Social Sciences.)

<b>Instructor:</b>	<i>Chelsea Rushton</i>
<b>Office Location:</b>	<i>TBA</i>
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<b>Office Hours:</b>	<i>BY APPOINTMENT ONLY</i>

**Course Description**

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**

**A READING SCHEDULE WILL BE LISTED ON D2L AND ALL READINGS WILL BE AVAILABLE ON D2L EITHER AS PDF FILES, OR WITH WEB LINKS TO THE TEXTS.**

## Required Readings (SUBJECT TO CHANGE)

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 MacMillan, 2014.
2. Erzen, Jale Nejdet. "Islamic Aesthetics: An Alternative Way to Knowledge." *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*. Vol. 65, No. 1. Winter 2007.
3. Martin, Paul C. "The Colourful Depictions of God in Mystical Consciousness." *Spiritus: A Journal of Christian Spirituality*. Vol. 14, No. 1, Spring 2014.
4. Lawlor, Robert. "The Practice of Geometry"; "Sacred Geometry: Metaphor of Universal Order." *Sacred Geometry: Philosophy and Practice*. London: Thames & Hudson, 1982.
5. Kane, Paul. "Inner Landscapes as Sacred Landscapes." *The Kenyon Review*, The New Series, Vol. 25, No. 3/4. Autumn 2003.

## Optional (Recommended) Readings

1. Clemen, Carl. "Anthroposophy." *The Journal of Religion*, Vol. 4, No. 3, 1924.
2. Pickstone, Charles. "A Theology of Abstraction: Wassily Kandinsky's 'Concerning the Spiritual in Art'". *Theology*, Volume 114, No. 32, 2011.
3. Fischer, Kathleen. "Long Life on a Fragile Planet: Nature, Spirituality, and Aging." *Journal of Religion, Spirituality, and Aging*. Vol. 23, Issue 3. May 2011.
4. Kurbanovsky, Alexi. "Malevich's Mystic Signs: From Iconoclasm to New Theology." *Sacred Stories: Religion and Spirituality in Modern Russia*. Indiana University Press, 2007.
5. 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.
6. 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.

## Assignments and Evaluation

### **PARTICIPATION (READING RESPONSES AND ATTENDANCE): 20%**

Students will be assigned FIVE readings (as listed above in REQUIRED READINGS) over the course of the term (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 handed in as 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)**

Wednesday May 11: The Great Underground River That Flows Through Modern Art

Monday May 16: Islamic Aesthetics: An Alternative Way to Knowledge

Wednesday May 18: The Colourful Depictions of God in Mystical Consciousness

Wednesday May 25: The Practice of Geometry

Monday June 6: Inner Landscapes as Sacred Landscapes

### **GLENBOW MUSEUM FIELD ASSIGNMENT, DUE MONDAY JUNE 6: 20%**

In this assignment, students will take an independent field trip (outside of class time) to the Glenbow Museum in Downtown Calgary. Students will select a work from the Glenbow's permanent exhibition, *Many Faces, Many Paths: Art of Asia*, and one work from course lecture content to make a comparison of formal and thematic qualities between the two artworks, and the traditions out of which they arise. This will contribute to a greater understanding of how Western and non-Western spiritual practices and art objects inform each other. DETAILS REGARDING ASSIGNMENT STRUCTURE AND GRADING SCHEME WILL BE MADE AVAILABLE IN CLASS AND ON D2L.

**REFLECTION JOURNAL / SKETCHBOOK, DUE WEDNESDAY JUNE 8: 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. 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. 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 JUNE 8: 10%**

This quiz will be comprised of three sections, with multiple choice, matching, and short answer questions that take up material from the lectures, readings, and field trips.

**CREATIVE ESSAY / PROJECT, DUE FRIDAY JUNE 10 BY 4:00 PM: 30%**  
(DROP OFF IN INSTRUCTOR'S OFFICE)

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.

**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.

**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.

Please indicate whether or **not a passing grade on any particular component of the course is essential for the student to pass the course as a whole - NO.**

**Registrar-Scheduled Final Exam – NO**

## 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%).

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

## Course Activities

On Monday May 16, we will spend part of class in the rug room at the Nickle Galleries in the TFDL Library, where Curator Michele Hardy will speak about and show examples of Persian and other carpets to complement our lecture on Henri Matisse.

On Wednesday May 25, students have the opportunity to participate in an optional non-graded, practical workshop to make and learn the fundamental principles of pendulums, the tool Emma Kunz used to plot all of her compositions before drawing them. The Workshop will be held in the last portion of class (1.45 - 2.20 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 at least 24 hours in advance of the class that they will be absent.

Students will take an independent field trip (outside of class time) to the Glenbow Museum toward the mandatory completion of their field assignment, due Monday June 6.

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 13-17. This is an optional, non-graded course component; we will decide by a class vote if students would like to exhibit their work.

## Additional Information

If students make pendulums (see course activities below), they will be required either to bring their own supplies, or contribute \$15 to the cost of supplies to be provided by the instructor.

Glenbow Museum field trip costs will involve Calgary transit fare and admission to the museum (\$11 with valid student ID.)

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

## 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 class mates 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/](http://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/policies/files/policies/student-accommodation-policy\\_0.pdf](http://www.ucalgary.ca/policies/files/policies/student-accommodation-policy_0.pdf)

### **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 go to [http://www.ucalgary.ca/registrar/deferred\\_final](http://www.ucalgary.ca/registrar/deferred_final)

## **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](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](http://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 2 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](mailto:ascarts@ucalgary.ca) or [artsads@ucalgary.ca](mailto: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.