

University of Toronto, Mississauga
Department of Visual Studies
FAH 130H5S – Introduction to Curating
Fall, 2015
Professor: Dr. Matthew Ryan Smith

Lecture: Friday, 9:00am - 11:00am
Room: IB Building, Room 210

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Office Hour: Friday, 11:00am – 12:00pm



Course Description

An introduction to the problematics of exhibition-making and an examination of the art curator's role in the process of selection, exhibition, interpretation. The course will review exhibition case histories from the past and present. Students will read key texts and analyze a range of exhibitions, gaining familiarity with a variety of curatorial models from museums, galleries and independent projects. Students will also visit a number of exhibitions and project spaces, analyzing them critically.

Prerequisites: FAH101H5/FAH105H5/FAH202H5, VCC101H5/VCC201H5, FAH289H5 and 0.5 additional credit in FAH/VCC

Recommended Preparation: FAH288H5, FAH289H5, FAH388H5

Required Course Readings: Available on Blackboard.

- All required readings will be available as PDFs on the Blackboard site for the course. Exhibition listings, images, and other support material will also be posted to Blackboard on an ongoing basis. Please check Blackboard and your UTM e-mail frequently.

Recommended: (available for purchase at the UTM Bookstore):

Simon and Schuster Handbook for Writers, Fourth Canadian Edition, available for purchase from Pearson's website: <http://vig.pearsoned.ca/catalog/academic/product/0,1144,0131272551,00.html>

Course Assignments and Evaluation Schedule:

Assignment	Due Date	Grade Weight
Participation*	Ongoing	20%
Exhibition Review	September 25 th	15%
Curation Writing Assignment	October 30 th	25%
Research Essay	November 27 th	40%

**NOTE ON PARTICIPATION: Students are expected to regularly visit exhibitions in Mississauga, Oakville, and the Greater Toronto Area (GTA) and contribute to group discussions held at the beginning of class. Recommended exhibitions and galleries will be posted to the Blackboard site on an ongoing basis. Feel free to post your own notices as well.*

Absence Policy

Penalties for Lateness

Late Assignments

Term work must be submitted by the assigned date. A penalty of 5% per day of lateness up to and including work submitted on the last day of the term will be applied by the Instructor. Work will not be accepted beyond one week after the due date (unless granted an extension due to special considerations).

Procedures and Rules

Missed Term Work, Tests and Extensions

- Extensions or deferred tests (including the final exam) can only be granted because of dire circumstances (severe illness, death of a loved one, etc.). We cannot make allowances because of work schedules, pre-arranged holidays, and so on.
- Student absences must be declared on ROSI. Supporting documentation is required (e.g. U of T medical certificate, death certificate, etc.).
- Students who missed a test due to circumstances beyond their control (e.g. illness, or an accident), can request that the Department grant them special consideration.

All requests for make-up tests and for extended time to submit term work beyond the last day of classes, must be submitted **within 48 hours from the date of the missed test or assignment**. Requests must be submitted on a special form obtained from the DVS Office or www.utm.utoronto.ca/dvs and submitted to the Undergraduate Counsellor (CC3051). If you submit medical documentation make sure it contains the statement *"This student was unable to write the test (or submit term work by the last day of classes, if applicable) on (date) for medical reasons"*. You **MUST** see your physician **on the day of the missed test or the day later** or your request will be denied. A statement merely acknowledging a report of illness made by the student to the physician is NOT acceptable. For further information on this procedure visit www.utm.utoronto.ca/dvs.

Should an illness prevent you from submitting your form to the office in person within 48 hours, emailing your documents will be accepted. This is on the understanding that the original copy will be submitted within one week from the date of the missed test or assignment. Late submissions will NOT be considered.

In case of emergencies (medical or other) contact the Undergraduate Counsellor on 905 828 3899 or email s.sullivan@utoronto.ca within 24hrs of the due date of an assignment or test.

No penalty will be assigned if your request for special consideration, described above, was successful.

DVS Grammar and Spelling Standard for Written Assignments:

We expect students enrolled in university courses to have mastered basic skills in spelling and grammar. All papers must exhibit proper spelling (including proper names, places, and words in

foreign languages) and grammar. Refined grammatical points over which there is disagreement even amongst experts are not at issue. Poor writing will be penalized. The **UTM Visual Studies Grammar Workshops**, which will appear under “My Organizations” on your Blackboard page, has online workshops and quizzes you can complete to improve your skills.

Statement on Academic Offences

For information on academic integrity and academic offences, including plagiarism, please refer to: <http://www.utoronto.ca/writing/plagsep.html> and [http://www.utoronto.ca/academic integrity/](http://www.utoronto.ca/academic%20integrity/)

University Statement on Academic Integrity

University Statement on Academic Integrity Academic is essential to the pursuit of learning and scholarship in a university, and to ensuring that a degree from the University of Toronto is a strong signal of each student’s individual academic achievement. As a result, the University treats cases of cheating and plagiarism very seriously.

The University of Toronto’s Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters (www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/policies/behaveac.htm) outlines the behaviours that constitute academic dishonesty and the process for addressing academic offences. Potential offences include, but are not limited to:

In papers and assignments:

1. Using someone else’s ideas or words without appropriate acknowledgement.
2. Submitting your own work in more than one course without the permission of the instructor.
3. Making up sources or facts.
4. Obtaining or providing unauthorized assistance on any assignment.

On tests and exams:

1. Using or possessing unauthorized aids.
2. Looking at someone else’s answers during an exam or test.
3. Misrepresenting your identity.

In academic work:

1. Falsifying institutional documents or grades.
2. Falsifying or altering any documentation required by the University, including (but not limited to) doctor’s notes.

All suspected cases of academic dishonesty will be investigated following procedures outlined in the Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters. If you have questions or concerns about what constitutes appropriate academic behaviour or appropriate research and citation methods, you are expected to seek out additional information on academic integrity from your instructor or from other institutional resources (see <http://www.utm.utoronto.ca/academic-integrity/resources/students>).

Equity Statement

The University of Toronto is committed to equity and respect for diversity. All members of the

learning environment in this course should strive to create an atmosphere of mutual respect. As a course instructor, I will neither condone nor tolerate behaviour that undermines the dignity or self-esteem of any individual in this course and wish to be alerted to any attempt to create an intimidating or hostile environment. It is our collective responsibility to create a space that is inclusive and welcomes discussion. Discrimination, harassment and hate speech will not be tolerated. If you have any questions, comments, or concerns you may contact the UTM Equity and Diversity officer at edo.utm@utoronto.ca or the University of Toronto Mississauga Students' Union Vice President Equity at vpequity@utmsu.ca.

Academic Rights

You, as a student at UTM, have the right to:

- Receive a syllabus by the first day of class.
- Rely upon a syllabus once a course is started. An instructor may only change marks' assignments by following the University Assessment and Grading Practices Policy provision 1.3.
- Refuse to use turnitin.com (you must be offered an alternative form of submission).
- Have access to your instructor for consultation during a course or follow up with the department chair if the instructor is unavailable.
- Ask the person who marked your term work for a re-evaluation if you feel it was not fairly graded. You have up to one month from the date of return of the item to inquire about the mark. If you are not satisfied with a re-evaluation, you may appeal to the instructor in charge of the course if the instructor did not mark the work. If your work is remarked, you must accept the resulting mark. You may only appeal a mark beyond the instructor if the term work was worth at least 20% of the course mark.
- Receive at least one significant mark (15% for H courses, 25% for Y courses) before the last day you can drop a course for H courses, and the last day of classes in the first week of January for Y courses taught in the Fall/Winter terms.
- Submit handwritten essays so long as they are neatly written.
- Have no assignment worth 100% of your final grade.
- Not have a term test worth 25% or more in the last two weeks of class.
- Retain intellectual property rights to your research.
- Receive all your assignments once graded.
- View your final exams. To see a final exam, you must submit an online Exam Reproduction Request within 6 months of the exam. There is a small non-refundable fee.
- Privacy of your final grades.
- Arrange for representation from Downtown Legal Services (DLS), a representative from the UTM Students' Union (UTMSU), and/or other forms of support if you are charged with an academic offence.

Blackboard

This course will use Blackboard, the online Learning Management System of UTM <https://portal.utoronto.ca/>. In order to access the portal, you will log in using your UTOR id and password. With Blackboard you will be able to: view important announcements, received course information (including syllabus), locate instructor and TA contact information and communicate with us, access course assignments, participate in group discussion, and view your grades. Communication through Blackboard requires a U of T email address. If you have not activated

your university email account, please do so immediately, so that you will not miss any important messages or information.

Weekly Course Work

You should plan on devoting an absolute minimum of three (3) hours of study outside of lecture and tutorials, which will consist of:

- Read all of the assigned readings (note that you are asked to *read* the assigned readings and thus be able to quickly and efficiently summarize them; this is all I ask of you).
 - Taking notes and preparing questions based on readings but related to course material.
 - Studying images.
 - Visiting critical exhibitions.
 - Discussing aspects of curatorial practice with friends, colleagues, and peers.
 - Conducting your own research.
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Lecture & Reading Schedule

September 11 – Course Introduction

September 18 – A Brief History of Curating Part I

- Bruce Altshuler, “Introduction,” *Salon to Biennial: Exhibitions that made Art History* (New York: Phaidon, 2008), 11-19.
- Iwona Blazwick, “Temple, White Cube, Laboratory,” *What Makes a Great Exhibition?*, eds. Paula Marincola and Philadelphia Exhibitions Initiative (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2006).

September 25 – A Brief History of Curating Part II

- Jessica Morgan, “What is a Curator,” *Ten Fundamental Questions of Curating*, 21-29.
- Svetlana Alpers, “The Museum as a Way of Seeing,” *Exhibiting Cultures: The Poetics and Politics of Museum Display*, eds. Ivan Karp and Steven D. Lavine (London: Smithsonian Museum Press, 1991), 25-32.
- Brian O’Doherty, “Context as Content” *Inside the White Cube: The Ideology of the Gallery Space* (San Francisco: Lapis Press, 1976), 65-86, 87-108.
- *Assignment: type “what is curating?” into Google and see what you find. Bring in a definition / example that you find interesting.*
- DUE: EXHIBITION REVIEW ASSIGNMENT

October 2 – Private Tour of the Art Gallery of Mississauga

- Meet at front entrance at 9:00am *sharp*.
- 300 City Centre Drive. Mississauga, ON L5B 3C1
- Stephen Greenblatt, “Resonance and Wonder,” *Exhibiting Cultures: The Poetics and Politics of Museum Display*, eds. Ivan Karp and Steven D. Lavine (Washington: Smithsonian Museum Press, 1991), 42-56.

- Robert Storr, “Show and Tell,” *What Makes a Great Exhibition?*, eds. Paula Marincola and Philadelphia Exhibitions Initiative (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2006), 14-31.
- Please familiarize yourself with the AGM’s mandate, acquisition policy, deaccessioning, etc.: <http://www.artgalleryofmississauga.com/>

October 9 – Cultural Property Theft, Repatriation, and Looting

- Neil Brodie and David Gill, “Looting: An International View” *Ethical Issues in Archaeology*, ed. Zimmerman, Vitelli, and Hollowell-Zimmer (New York: AltaMira Press, 2003), 31-44.
- Ruth B. Phillips, “Fielding Culture: Dialogues Between Art History and Anthropology,” *Museum Pieces: Towards the Indigenization of Canadian Museums* (Kingston/Montreal: McGill-Queens University Press, 2012), 103-110.
- Please review: ICOM: Fighting the illicit traffic in cultural property: http://icom.museum/traffic_links.html
- Please review: American Indian Ritual Object Repatriation Foundation: <http://www.repatriationfoundation.org/>
- In-class film screening: *Totem: The Return of the G'psgolox Pole* (2003)

October 16 – Curating the Controversial, the Difficult, and the (Un)Dead

- José van Dijck, “Bodyworlds: the Art of Plastinated Cadavers.” *Configurations* 9 (2001), 99-126.
- Rachel Hughes, “The Abject Artefacts of Memory: Photographs from Cambodia’s Genocide,” *Media Culture Society* 25 (2003), 23-44.
- (Optional): Matthew Ryan Smith, “The ROM’s “Observance and Memorial,”” <http://castage.blouinartinfo.com/news/story/836486/the-roms-observance-and-memorial-brings-tortuous-history-to>
- (Optional): Japanese Poop Exhibition <http://kotaku.com/japanese-children-climb-into-a-giant-toilet-for-science-1599610978>

October 23 – Writing Workshop

- Guest speaker: Dr. Tyler Tokaryk, Robert Gillespie Academic Skills Centre
- Andrei Pop, “How to Do Things With Pictures: A Guide to Writing in Art History,” Department of History of Art and Architecture, Harvard College (2008), 1-37.
- Please review: Marjorie Munsterberg, *Writing About Art*, <http://writingaboutart.org/pages/formalanalysis.html>,
- In-class exercise: write formal analysis of art object or artefact.
- In-class exercise: write didactic wall labels for contents of the classroom.
- *Assignment: Please bring an object or artefact (or photograph of an object or artefact) to class. This object or artefact will form the central component of your formal analysis. We will deal with these objects in two ways, first as material goods that you will measure, weigh, note any marks, etc., photograph, and draw as a part of this assignment. We will also discuss how even the most mundane of objects often have hidden histories that you may have to consider. You will submit your accession form for participation purposes. (Hint: don’t bring in a personal object; your object should not be about you).*

October 30 – Problems in Curating Heritage Tourism

- Eric Gable and Richard Handler, “After Authenticity at an American Heritage Site,” *American Anthropologist* 98(3) (1996): 568-78.
- Chris Thornton, "Turning tragedy into a tourist industry The hard men of Northern Ireland are conducting tours of Belfast's trouble spots," *Time International* 166 (2005): p. 20. <http://content.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,901051010-1113633,00.html>
- Tracy McNicoll, Ginanne Brownell, and Carla Power, “Back from the Brink: Cities on the Rebound from Genocide, War and Destruction are Not Afraid of Using their Brutal Legacies to Help Lure Tourists,” *Newsweek* (April 11, 2005), 56. <http://www.highbeam.com/doc/1G1-131174973.html>
- Film screening: Coco Fusco and Guillermo Gómez-Peña, *The Couple in the Cage*, 1997.
- DUE: CURATION WRITING ASSIGNMENT

November 6 – Curatorial Ethics

- Jennifer Fisher, “Trick or Treat: Naming a Curatorial Ethics,” *Naming a Practice: Curatorial Strategies for the Future*, ed. Peter White (Banff: Banff Centre Press, 1996), 207-214.
- Matthew Ryan Smith, “Notes on Curating Autobiographical Art,” *ESSE: Arts + Opinions* 84 (2015), 34-39.
- American Association of Museums, “A Code of Ethics for Curators,” Curator’s Committee (2009), <http://www.aam-us.org/docs/continuum/curcomethics.pdf?sfvrsn=0>
- (Optional) Kate Heartfield. “The Ethics of Donations.” *The Ottawa Citizen* (17 July, 2007), C4. http://www.canada.com/story_print.html?id=7e632cf6-c690-48c5-9d50-477be0ba2023&sponsor=

November 13 – Guest Lecture: Kunstverin Toronto (Kari Cwynar and Kara Hamilton)

- David Balzer, “Work,” *Curationism: How Curating Took Over the Art World and Everything Else* (Toronto: Coach House Books, 2014), 97-137.

November 20 – The People vs. Public Art Curation

- Cameron Cartiere, “Coming in from the Cold: A Public Art History,” *The Practice of Public Art*, eds. Cameron Cartiere and Shelly Willis (London and New York: Routledge, 2008), 7-17.
- Annie Gerin, Introduction: Off Base,” *Public Art In Canada: Critical Perspectives*, eds. Annie Gerin, James S. McLean (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2009), 3-22.
- *Assignment: find an interesting example of public art to share with the class. Please post a brief (ie. just a few words such as: Bristol See No Evil graffiti project) description of your find on the discussion board on Blackboard. The strongest examples will be discussed in class (hint: you may be asked to briefly speak about the piece if chosen!).*

November 27 – Final class

- Course review, evaluation, and discussion.
- DUE: RESEARCH ESSAY ASSIGNMENT

ADDITIONAL READINGS AND RESOURCES

Altshuler, Bruce. *Salon to Biennial : Exhibitions that made Art History*. New York: Phaidon, 2008.

Beall-Fofana, Barbara A. *Understanding the Art Museum*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Education, 2007.

Beyond the Box : Diverging Curatorial Practices. Ed. Melanie A. Townsend. Banff, AB: Banff Centre Press, 2003.

Brennan, Marcia. *Curating Consciousness : Mysticism and the Modern Museum*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2010.

Carrier, David. *Museum Skepticism : A History of the Display of Art in Public Galleries*. Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 2006.

Cautionary Tales : Critical Curating. Eds. Steven Rand, Heather Kouris, and Apex Art C.P. (Gallery). New York: apexart, 2007.

Collective Curating. Milan: Silvana, 2009.

Contemporary Cultures of Display. Ed. Emma Barker. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1999.

Crimp, Douglas. *On the Museum's Ruins*. Ed. Louise Lawler. Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1993.

Curating Now : Imaginative Practice, Public Responsibility. Eds. Paula Marincola, et al. Philadelphia, PA: Philadelphia Exhibitions Initiative, 2001.

Curating Subjects : Occasional Table. Eds. Paul O'Neill and Søren Andreasen. London: de Appel, 2007.

The Edge of Everything : Reflections on Curatorial Practice. Ed. Catherine Thomas. Banff, Alta.: Banff Centre Press, 2002.

Exhibiting Cultures : The Poetics and Politics of Museum Display. Eds. Ivan Karp, Steven Lavine, and Rockefeller Foundation. Washington: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1991.

The Expanding World of Art, 1874-1902. Ed. Elizabeth Basye Gilmore Holt. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1988.

Graham, Beryl. *Rethinking Curating : Art After New Media*. Ed. Sarah Cook. Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 2010.

Harald Szeemann : Individual Methodology. Eds. Florence Derieux, et al. New York: Distributed by D.A.P., 2007.

Holt, Elizabeth Basye Gilmore. *The Triumph of Art for the Public : The Emerging Role of Exhibitions and Critics*. Washington, D.C.: Decatur House Press, 1980.

Issues in Curating Contemporary Art and Performance. Eds. Judith Rugg and Michèle Sedgwick. Chicago: Intellect, 2007.

Kachur, Lewis. *Displaying the Marvelous : Marcel Duchamp, Salvador Dalí, and Surrealist Exhibition Installations*. Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 2001.

Klonk, Charlotte. *Spaces of Experience : Art Gallery Interiors from 1800 to 2000*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009.

Manasseh, Cyrus. *The Problematic of Video Art in the Museum, 1968-1990*. Amherst, NY: Cambria Press, 2009.

A Manual for the 21st Century Art Institution : A Room by Room Guide to the Contemporary Institution of the Future. Eds. Bruce Altshuler and Shamita Sharmacharja. London: Whitechapel Gallery, 2009.

Museums by Artists. Eds. A. A. Bronson, Peggy Gale, and Art Metropole. Toronto, Canada: Art Metropole, 1983.

New Media in the White Cube and Beyond : Curatorial Models for Digital Art. Ed. Christiane Paul. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2008.

Newhouse, Victoria. *Art and the Power of Placement*. New York: Monacelli Press, 2005.

Obrist, Hans-Ulrich. *A Brief History of Curating*. Ed. Lionel Bovier. Dijon: Les Presses du réel, 2008.

Obsession, Compulsion, Collection : On Objects, Display Culture and Interpretation. Eds. Anthony Frank Kiendl, et al. Banff, Alta.: Banff Centre Press, 2004.

O'Doherty, Brian. *Inside the White Cube : The Ideology of the Gallery Space*. Expanded ed. ed. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999.

Placentile, Milena. *Who are we Doing this for, Anyway? : Engaging Diverse Audiences through Curatorial Practices in Contemporary Art*. Ed. University of Toronto. |cc2005.:, 2005.

Putnam, James. *Art and Artifact : The Museum as Medium*. 2nd ed. ed. London: Thames & Hudson, 2009.

Raising Frankenstein : Curatorial Education and its Discontents. Eds. Barbara Fischer, et al. London: Koenig Books, 2011.

Serota, Nicholas. *Experience Or Interpretation : The Dilemma of Museums of Modern Art.* New York: Thames and Hudson, 1997.

The Straight Or Crooked Way : Curating Experience. Eds. Max Andrews and Royal College of Art (Great Britain). London: Royal College of Art, 2003.

Thea, Carolee. *Foci : Interviews with Ten International Curators.* New York, N.Y.: Apex Art Curatorial Program, 2001.

Thinking about Exhibitions. Eds. Reesa Greenberg, Bruce W. Ferguson, and Sandy Nairne. New York: Routledge, 1996.

Under Construction : Perspectives on Institutional Practice. Eds. Vanessa Müller and Nicolaus Schafhausen. English ed. ed. Köln: Walther König, 2006.

Wallach, Alan. *Exhibiting Contradiction : Essays on the Art Museum in the United States.* Amherst, Mass.: University of Massachusetts Press, 1998.

What Makes a Great Exhibition?. Eds. Paula Marincola and Philadelphia Exhibitions Initiative. Chicago, IL: Distributed for Reaktion Books in the USA and Canada by the University of Chicago Press, 2006.

Words of Wisdom : A Curator's Vade Mecum on Contemporary Art. Eds. Carin Kuoni and Independent Curators International. New York: Independent Curators International, 2001.