Art 06:
An Introduction to Photography as Art

Instructor: Adam Katseff

Class Description:
What is the difference between a hobbyist’s snapshot and a photograph hanging in a museum? When is a photograph simply a means of documentation, and when is it a work of art? This contemporary twist on the classic photography course explores these questions through hands-on techniques, portfolio building, and an introduction to the masters of photography. Through weekly assignments and critiques, we will work to hone your technical skills, build confidence behind the lens, and create a portfolio of beautifully printed images. This course will help students looking to gain expertise in composition, editing, and personal artistic expression. Mastery of the technical and conceptual elements that make for a compelling image will translate easily to all cameras, all media, and all forms of visual expression.

Course Objectives:
- Gain a basic understanding of the principles of photography: camera and lens mechanics, exposure, raw file developing and editing
- Investigate the relationship between analogue and digital photography
- Review historical and contemporary fine art photography
● Build a personal canon of artists relevant to your own work
● Create a portfolio of final prints

Supply list:
● DSLR camera with manual settings
● Laptop with Lightroom and Photoshop
● Printing capabilities (at home or at a lab)

Reading List:
Henry Horenstein-
● Digital Photography

Stephen Laskevitch-
● Photoshop CC and Lightroom

Robert Adams-
● Why People Photograph
● Beauty in Photography

Fulford and Halpern
● The Photographer's Playbook

Online Resources-
● Lynda.com (requires subscription)
● http://www.jkost.com/
● tv.adobe.com

Requirements for a Letter Grade and/or Credit:
● There are three options for grades or credits:
● To receive a letter grade (A, B, C, D, No Pass), weekly assignments must be completed and reviewed.
● Credit/No Credit - attendance and participation (as determined by the instructor) is required.
● No Grade Requested (this is the default option) no work is required; no credit shall be received; no proof of attendance can be provided. (Not suitable for those requiring proof of attendance/completion.)
Schedule:

Week 1

Class:
- Intro to course
- What is a camera? Cardboard box camera demo
- Looking at pictures: (invention and a contemporary twist) Home and what's familiar
  Talbot, Daguerre, Abelardo Morell, Nicholas Nixon, Harry Callahan, Emmet Gowin
- Intro to camera and manual controls: understanding optics, aperture and shutter speed

Assignment:
Go out and make pictures! Experiment with aperture and shutter speed and using your camera's manual controls.

Week 2

Class:
- Looking at Pictures: (the personal canon) finding inspiration from other photographers and learning from their photographs
- Begin discussing the first assignment for critique (100 pictures on one subject)
- Raw file developing: methods in the Lightroom

Assignment:
- Finish processing the round of files
- Shoot 100 images on one subject (this will be discussed at length in class)
- Spend time in the Art Library

Week 3-

Class:
- Looking at Pictures: how the world looks through a lens and on paper- using printing techniques creatively and determining how an image looks printed. We will look at how photographers print the same image different ways to express different moods, using Ansel Adams as an example.
- Lab: Intro to file editing

Assignment:
Make contact sheets
- Make (5) final files with 8x10 prints

Reading:
- Intro to The Photographer's Eye by John Szarkowski
Week 4-

Class:
- **Critique #1: 100 pictures on 1 subject**, discussion on print quality and how the act of photographing changes the subject
- We’ll also start a discussion about how artists influence one another, and introduce our next assignment by singling out a photographer whose work inspires you, and whose images you’d like to learn more about.

Assignment:
- Find a book from the library by a photographer who inspires you, and whose images you’re interested in emulating.

Reading:
- *Why People Photograph* by Robert Adams

Week 5-

Class:
- Open lab- work on finishing prints from the last critique and we will also cover more advanced printing techniques such as burning and dodging. Reprint a couple of the images from the first critique.

Assignment-
- Begin shooting for assignment #2 (imitate another photographer)

Week 6-

Class:
- Discussion of what photographer you chose for the assignment and why
- Lab: Begin editing images for next critique

Assignment:
- Shoot and print 5 images for the critique

Reading:
- *Colleagues* by Robert Adams

Week 7-

Class:
- **Critique #2: Imitating another photographer**
- Discussion of next assignment: people or place

Assignment, due Nov 10:
- Begin making pictures for next assignment: people or place. We’ll use
techniques learned from past critiques to make better and more personal photographs.

**Week 8-**

**Class:**
- Looking at pictures: People & Portraits, Landscape Photography and looking at a place
- Lab: advanced editing of images for print

**Assignment-**
- Finish editing 5-10 images for final critique

**Week 9-**

**Class:**
- **Critique #3: People/Portraits or Landscape/Place/Home**
- What’s next in the world of fine art photography? New work, new processes and future classes