

Wexner Exhibition Seminar: Critical Reflection Through Contemporary Art
Freshman Seminar: One Credit

ARTSCI 1138.xx

Day TBA

Time and Place TBA

Professor Laura Lisbon

Department of Art

Office Hours: by appointment

Hopkins Hall 445

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Course Description:

Using the framework of the Wexner Center Exhibition (Fall 2016), *Leap before you Look: Black Mountain College 1933-1957*, the seminar will explore the ways in which the arts offer unique opportunities for thinking and critical reflection. The exhibition will provide the backdrop for our own seminar discussions and studio experiments in the classroom. While we will investigate the experimental approaches and practices of many of the artists in the exhibition, we will focus on two of the primary artists and teachers at Black Mountain College—Anni Albers and Josef Albers. We will incorporate studio exercises into the seminar setting to experience some of the Albers' lessons and innovative pedagogical approaches to art and, by extension, life.

Repeated visits to the Wexner Center exhibition, discussion of readings, studio exercises, and group presentations will help us better understand the aspirations and continuing relevance of some of the educational ideals put into practice through art at Black Mountain College.

Course requirements: Students are expected to attend each class, read material that is due, and come prepared with two questions from the readings for discussion. Students will be asked to keep a critical reflections journal/sketchbook for recording questions and reflections of the weeks' readings (250 words) and for visual responses to seminar and studio exercises.

Students will submit the journal/sketchbook at the middle of the course and at the end so that I might evaluate it for clarity, quality of critical reflection, and innovation.

The group oral presentation will occur in the eighth week of the semester. Groups will make 15-minute presentations to the class of a particular work from the exhibition, addressing its historical context, structural features, and relevance today. The group will be evaluated based on clarity of the description, research, and critical reflection.

Grading: Satisfactory/ Unsatisfactory (midterm and final assessments)

Class participation:	25%
Critical reflections journal/sketchbook:	25%
Engagement with studio exercises:	25%
Oral group presentation:	25%

Course Objectives:

- To introduce students to the Wexner Center, in particular the Fall 2016 exhibition, *Leap before you Look: Black Mountain College 1933-1957*
- To enhance critical reflection and thinking through the arts
- To encourage active engagement with learning through studio art and collaborative exercises
- To develop skills in observing, describing, and presenting art concepts and works through oral presentations

Academic Misconduct:

It is the responsibility of the Committee on Academic Misconduct to investigate or establish procedures for the investigation of all reported cases of student academic misconduct. The term “academic misconduct” includes all forms of student academic misconduct wherever committed; illustrated by, but not limited to, cases of plagiarism and dishonest practices in connection with examinations. Instructors shall report all instances of alleged academic misconduct to the committee (Faculty Rule 3335-5-487). For additional information, see the Code of Student Conduct <http://studentlife.osu.edu/csc/>.

Students with Disabilities:

Students with disabilities that have been certified by the Office for Disability Services will be appropriately accommodated and should inform the instructor as soon as possible of their needs. The Office for Disability Services is located in 150 Pomerene Hall, 1760 Neil Avenue; telephone 292-3307, TDD 292-0901; <http://www.ods.ohio-state.edu/>.

Biographical Statement

As a painter and professor in the Department of Art, I have taught painting and drawing courses to undergraduate and graduate students at OSU since 1992. My research focus is on the relationship between the theory and practice of painting in the broader context of contemporary art. I also take every opportunity to teach cross-disciplinary seminars. Examples of previous seminars include: *The Emergence of the Tableau; Walls and Grounds*; and *Arguably Painting or Paintings' Arguments*. In the fall of 2011, I was a Fulbright Specialist Scholar at the University of the Arts, Central Saint Martins, in London. I also write about painting. I am on the editorial board of *The Journal of Contemporary Painting*, and I have worked with the Wexner Center on various projects, including my role as co-curator and author of the exhibition *As Painting: Division and Displacement* in 2001 (catalogue with MIT Press). Additionally, I have served for many years on the ASC Honors Committee as well as Arts Honors, and I was one of the Faculty Resident Directors for London Honors in 2012 and 2013.

Weekly Readings and Exercises:

Note: Readings will be offered on Canvas, but all books are also on Reserve in Fine Arts Library

1. Introduction: Black Mountain College, context, ideals, and relevance
preview: Wexner Exhibition: *Leap before you Look: Black Mountain College 1933- 1957*
read: catalogue introductory essay, "Imaginary Landscape" by Helen Molesworth
2. Anni Albers, "Starting at Zero" and the "discipline of forming"
read: selections from "On Weaving" and "We Need the Crafts for their Contact with Materials" by Anni Albers
3. art exercise; slow and fast weaving
read selections from: "Bauhaus Weaving Theory" by T'ai Smith
4. Josef Albers, "Respect the other material, or color—or your neighbor. Respect the one you weren't paying attention to."
"Josef Albers, To Open Eyes" by Frederick Horowitz and Brenda Danilowitz
5. art exercise; color interaction
read: selections from "Interaction of Color" by Josef Albers
6. Visit to Wexner Exhibition
read: selections from, "The Experimenters: Chance and Design at Black Mountain College" by Eva Diaz
7. Black Mountain artists and community
read: selections from catalogue: "Intentional Communities" by Gloria Sutton; "Texture of the South: Roland Hayes and Integration at Black Mountain College" by Bryan Barcena
8. Role of Pedagogy and Art
read: catalogue selection: "A progressive Education" by Ruth Erickson
attend: Wexner Panel: "Artist Designed Spaces for Interdisciplinary Learning"
9. Return Visit to Wexner Center to prepare for presentations
10. Small Group Presentations on artwork in exhibition
11. Small Group Presentations on artwork in exhibition
12. Bringing together ways of forming and ways of living

read: "Some Considerations of Designing" by Anni Albers
<http://albersfoundation.org/teaching/anni-albers/lectures/#tab4>
"On Designing" by Anni Albers
<http://albersfoundation.org/teaching/anni-albers/texts/#tab1>

13. art exercise: material studies
read: "The Educational Value of Manual Work and Handicraft in Relation to Architecture" by Josef Albers
<http://www.albersfoundation.org/teaching/josef-albers/texts/#tab3>
14. art exercise: free studies
read: "Art as Experience" by Josef Albers
<http://www.albersfoundation.org/teaching/josef-albers/texts/#tab2>
read: "One Aspect of Art Work" by Anni Albers
<http://www.albersfoundation.org/teaching/anni-albers/texts/#tab3>

Books on Reserve in Fine Arts Library:

Helen Molesworth, *Leap before you Look: Black Mountain College 1933-1957* (2015)
Eva Diaz, *The Experimenters: Chance and Design at Black Mountain College* (2015)
Frederick Horowitz and Brenda Danilowitz, *Josef Albers, To Open Eyes* (2009)
T'ai Smith, *Bauhaus Weaving Theory: From Feminine Craft to Mode of Design* (2015)
Josef Albers, *Interaction of Color* (1963)
Anni Albers, *On Weaving* (2003)

Relevant Websites:

<http://www.albersfoundation.org>
<https://www.icaboston.org/exhibitions/leap-you-look-black-mountain-college-1933-1957>
<https://hammer.ucla.edu/exhibitions/2016/leap-before-you-look-black-mountain-college-1933-1957/>