

Arts of our Times -Media as Material for Practice

Spring Semester - AY 2023-23
(Gateway Course)

Level: 1000/2000/3000

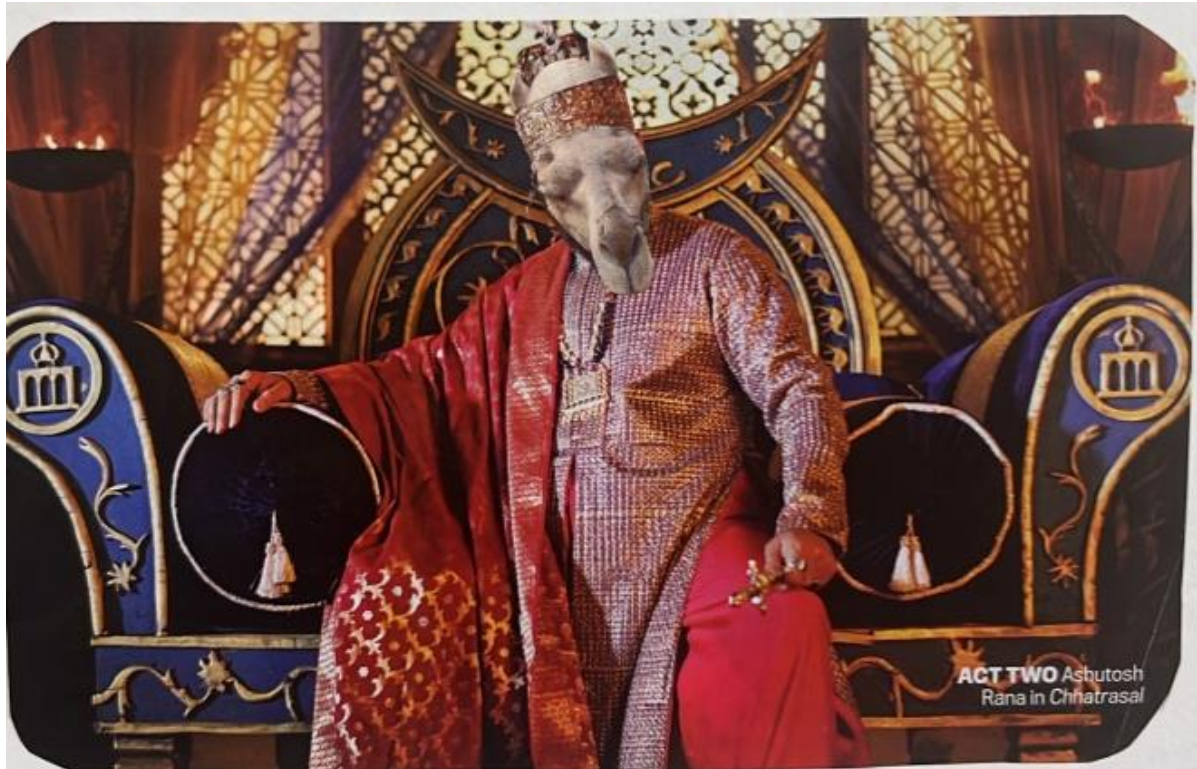


Image credit: Nylaa Ahmed. (UG 25). Collage with found print material. 2022

Schedule: Fridays - 10:10am 11:40 am, 11:50am – 1:20pm

Facilitator: Rakhi Peswani

Office Hours: Mondays 3pm.

Course Description:

This course introduces fundamentals of contemporary artistic practice through material (or immaterial) explorations within certain critical Media contexts. Students will be introduced to expanded understanding of Media, in its older and more contemporary forms.

Various media will be introduced with questions about power, access, hierarchy, ownership, control, and other forms of hegemony. Media will be seen in its mainstream, alternate and forms that create distinct breakage in tight binaries.

The course will look at art making as a tool to develop probing questions and expressions through a base in fictional, non-functional routes or intensities of expressions, encouraging work in visual, textual and other forms of media and its possibilities of proliferation.

Participants will be introduced to selected arts and artists of 20th C, pivotal points in Art histories where artistic forms punctured the social fabric through critical media interventions.

Media and its modern forms of proliferation will be explored – duplication, imprints, text, printing, photography, still images and moving image will be experimented to understand the possible reach, potential, distribution of the forms. We will conceptualise social, cultural, intellectual aspects of our lives and create expressive forms through politics of media and mediation.

Methods:

The course will introduce an expanded discourse on Art and Media, the relevance and political choices of media forms in making Art as a critical expression.

The course will enable work with drawings, doodles, journaling, artists' books/ forms of print and publishable material - from T-shirts to blogs will be seen as social and spatial interventions creating ruptures in a social context and as public exposition of ideas.

Participants will develop lines of enquiry – through media forms – as narratives, intermedia interventions (posters, zines, poems, oral storytelling, conversation), pop up exhibition making and other critical

forms of media to address the notions of art and making of its Public, its Viewers, audience or its consumers.

Channels for information and communication will be seen as mediums to investigate and experiment in creation of artistic practice. 2 Dimensional, 3 Dimensional works and their relation with time and space. Specific forms of media will be explored to locate contingencies of circulation and institutionalised structures of dissemination of ideas.

Artistic forms will be explored and developed as possible tactics and tool of communication, through interventions, provocations and reflections in social/political/cultural contexts.

Deliverables:

The course will be structured around specific affects and experiences of different media forms, encouraging production and dissemination of ideas as possibilities of the course outcome.

We will be working with following analogue and digital tools:

- drawings, doodles, writing and their means of reproduction and dissemination.
- proliferation of ideas through low tech print technologies.
- Photography, Text and Print (analogue and digital).
- Sequential photography and narrative building.
- Zine making/Photo book/ Photo essay.
- Sites and spaces as media.
- Public display, Public dissemination or Exhibition making as a media form.
- **Mid Term Assignment** A critical report of 1500 words on the India Art Fair will be the mid-term assignment for this course.
- **Final Assignment:** A reflective essay on Art and/as Media. A Public Exhibition with all practice.



Image-text rebus with Klecksography- Resham Anand Feb 2023.

Module 1:

Image Text Rebus –

- Photography, Newspaper and Reportage.
- Drawing, Mark making and replication- Photocopy and Print.
- Legible to illegible and back – Apophenia and the everyday.
- The world as Images- Ubiquity of the Photograph.
- Popular print culture and Found and Scavenged images.

Discussions:

Importance of a Manifesto for an artist. Art and the Avantgarde

Practice Exercises:

1. Automatic Writing/Drawing, Photostat printing/ Linoprints
2. Write a Manifesto for Arts of these times.
3. Photography exercises
4. Inkblots and Interpretation.
5. Collages.

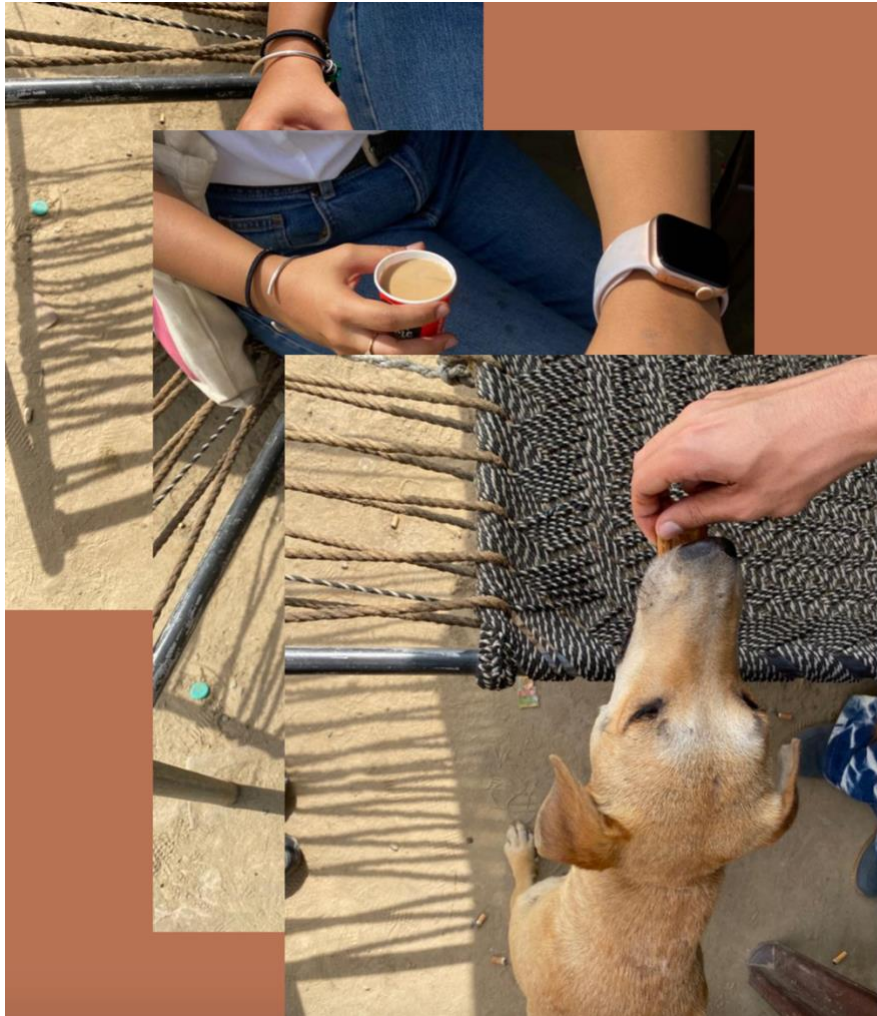
Readings:

A Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproductions
Marshall McLuhan - Counterblast

Key words: Dada and Surrealism, Avantgarde Art, Popular Culture, Pop Art, Kitsch, Found Image, Collage, Reportage, Fake News,

Field Trip: The Course will have a field trip at the India Art Fair.
(3rd or 4th Feb 2024)

Mid-term Assignment: A critical report of 1500 words on the India Art Fair will be the mid-term assignment for this course.



Detail from *Moments at a Tapri-A photo essay* by Kabir Ghosh March 2023

Module 2:

The Question of Real and Fiction in the Media and the Arts.

- Mainstream media and Modernity.
- Media expansion- from the Light bulb to the Internet-
- The Functional vs the Aesthetic
- Sculpture to Architecture - the *real* space and the mediated space.
- Systems of Knowledge Production – Art as Alternate Media. Collections, Museums, Archives, Art Fairs and the Art market.

Discussions:

Art as Media. What is Alternate Media. The Death of Avantgarde. Art and building context.

Practice Exercises:

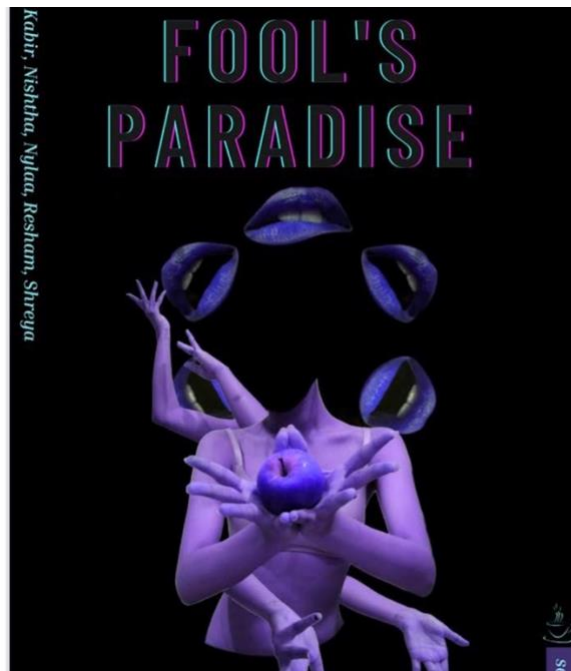
1. Photo Narrative, Photo Essay
2. Artists' Book/Zine making.
3. Occupying sites/Pop up store.

Readings:

Guy Debord – The Society of Spectacle

Marshall McLuhan- Understanding Media

Key Words: : Situationist International, Avantgarde Art, Art and Reportage, Live telecast, Fact and Fiction. Art and Spectacle. 3D Printing and Sculpture/Architecture, Public art, Art and Labour. Art and Work. Art as Work.



Module 3 : Text, Context, Site and Sight

Text to Intertextuality - Exhibition and the viewer,

- Moving image, and other forms of Storytelling.
- The Niche and the Mainstream- Art and Media revised.
- What is Social Media? Institutional claims on Individual creativity.
- Making strange- Fractures, Punctures, Ruptures, Cracks and Fissures in Media.
- Art and the Repartee - Cynicism, Mimicry, Satire, Humour, Irony
- Alternate Media/ Critical Media

Discussions:

Role of Storytelling. Art and Play/Games. Intermedia storytelling. Graffiti and Art. Everyday life and critical media practice. Avantgarde and the Global South.

Readings:

Miklos Erhardt / Joanne Richardson – The Art of Subtraction

Key Words: Fluxus, Strategies and Tactics, Art and Play, Art and the objects of art. Consumer culture and Art, Graffiti

Practice Exercises:

1. Real publicity for a fictional event.
2. Story about a real event.
3. Creating parasitic images through alternate forms of media.
4. Publicity for Final Exhibition.
5. Final Exhibition



Interactive Manifesto Tree created by batch of Spring 2023 students for the final exhibition Fool's paradise

Learning Outcomes:

Students will learn pertinent aspects about alternate media forms, art as a political tool for resistance, practices in Contemporary Arts, namely:

1. Understanding the politics of media and their relational possibilities in the age of mass production and digital circulation.
2. Students will gain insights on the roll of the viewer, creation of a public, with a work of art.

3. Explore practices that shaped the Avantgarde movements of 20th C.
4. Critical revisions about 'work of art' in the current age of global capitalism and digital circulation.
5. Basics of art making from a studio to exhibition making.

Grading Rubric:

75% Practice

- (30%) Quality and craftsmanship of ideas (Production)
- (15%) Critical and Thematic concerns (Concepts)
- (30%) Implementation of ideas/interventions/communication (Expression/ Dissemination)

25% Class participation

(10%) Attendance

(15%) Participation in questions/ discussions

Attendance Policy :

Up to two absences permitted without questions

(Each session of a practice course is 3 hours long, equivalent to two theory classes.)