

Syllabus
Fine Art Filmmaking 4500
Spring 2010
Professor Phil Solomon
Office: ATLAS 347
Email: solomon@colorado.edu
Voicemail: 2-3016
Class time: Fridays 1-4:50 p.m.
Office Hours: Wednesdays, 1-3:00 p.m., and some Fridays, after class by appointment

Aims and Goals of the Course

This is an Advanced Filmmaking class that is especially designed to study filmmaking as a first person, poetic art form. To this end, we will be spending a great deal of class time involved with aesthetics and close analysis of a variety of film works communally investigate how the aesthetic criteria in the other arts might apply to an art of film. This is, therefore, a combination lecture/studio class - theory, technique, and applied ideas.

Make no mistake - this will not be a traditional 4500, crew-oriented narrative filmmaking class in which we spend a lot of time going over scripts, treatments, etc. This is a class designed primarily for the production and study of poetic, experimental film - *you may use actors if you like, but I am interested in having you come up with an alternative narrative short form filmmaking that is not just limited to the usual "set-up and payoff" one-liner. I want you to re-think your filmmaking, to try things you have not previously tried before, etc.* You may work in any form of filmmaking that you wish, but I would like to put the emphasis here on "alt.": alt. narrative, alt. documentary, etc. Finally, your form should suit the subject matter at hand. ***Please not that if you wish to work from a script based narrative, your script is due for work-shopping within the first three weeks of class.***

My end of the bargain is to present to you a variety of works (some of which you may have seen before, no doubt, from our collection) and give you my notion of the aesthetic foundation and tradition of the works, and perhaps offer some related works from the other arts in order to look at film in a framework outside of traditional film syntax. There may be assigned readings, a variety of handouts (technical and aesthetic) and, I hope, some serious conversation, and I will require you to work with me on a contractual basis. ***Within the next three weeks, I want you to write up a contract/treatment for your final project this semester, stated as specifically as you can – including timeline, budget, treatment, tools you will need, film stocks you will use, techniques you wish to explore.*** Your grade will partly be based on how you fulfilled this written contract at the end of the semester (***no incompletes will be granted, unless there are serious extenuating circumstances**). You will be required to submit some work-in-progress (footage) from your final film by mid-semester – and then continue to show your work on a regular basis to the class for ongoing feedback. Your grade will be based on the completion of your contracted projects and the quality of the work. Attendance is mandatory, roll will be taken, and class participation is an integral part of your final grade. **Any more than one unexcused absence will lower your grade by full grade per absence.** (e.g., 2 absences, the highest grade you can expect to get will be a B). Because we only meet once a week, each absence is like missing two classes. Please take advantage of office hours to supplement our class meetings.

Show up on time – if you arrive more than 5 minutes after class starts, you will be marked "late". 3 "lates" = 1 absence. We will take a 10 minute break each class for food and coffee, etc.. Getting equipment from the Kage is an acceptable excuse for lateness on occasion.

Grading Criteria and breakdown

- **Four short practice (in the musical sense) assignments that are designed to offer you technical practice, aesthetic feedback, and hopefully to generate ideas and techniques for your final film** (10 points each) - *I piece is due every two weeks for the first two months* - (40 points). Your choice of film or dv.
- **1-3 page (minimum) per screening journal of responses to outside screenings** from First Person/Brakhage Sundays and the required Brakhage Symposium weekend – (note: 3 outside screenings, plus the *required Brakhage Symposium* 5 points each) – (20 points)
- **Final Thesis Project** – (40 points)

OUTSIDE SCREENINGS FOR YOUR JOURNAL

FIRST PERSON CINEMA SPRING 2010 – MONDAYS, 7:00 PM:

JANUARY 25 – THE STUDENT AWARD SHOWCASE

MARCH 1- PAT O'NEILL

MARCH 12-14 – THE BRAKHAGE SYMPOSIUM (*YOU ARE REQUIRED TO ATTEND)

MARCH 29 – BLACK MARIA

APRIL 5 – CRAIG BALDWIN

APRIL 12 – BEN RUSSELL

***First Sunday of every month – 4 Brakhage screenings, 7:30 pm, ATLAS 100**

DAY BY DAY SYLLABUS

We will look into the following topics in and around experimental film production:

JANUARY 15/JANUARY 22 - Photography/ Cinematography

- a. The idea of the frame and film composition. 1:33 vs 16x9. Static vs Motion.
- b. Review of the Bolex 16mm camera as an instrument – in-camera superimposition, fps, variable shutter, open shutter photography, etc. The Tobin time lapse intervalometer.
- c. Super 8 possibilities with the Nizo camera for 16mm blowups or digital transfer
- d. A visit from Robert David of Cinemalab to discuss working with the lab and creative options

Screenings: Films by Peter Hutton, Nathaniel Dorsky, Kurt Kren, David Gatten and Phil Solomon

JANUARY 29 - Optical Printing/JK printers

Introduction to the JK printers; Full workshop into various techniques of optical printing, including blowing-up from Super-8, Bi-Packing, traveling and stationary mattes, filtering, interferences, re-photographing painted film, freeze frames, optical zooms, etc.

Readings: various handouts on Optical Printing

Films by Murray, Tcherkassky, Arnold, Solomon

FEBRUARY 5 - DIGITAL/ FILM and FILM/DIGITAL optical printers; Aesthetics of found footage

Films that use optical printing and traveling mattes in a variety of ways; techniques in the service of aesthetics; review of technical lecture from previous week.

Screenings: Solomon, Brakhage, Fonoroff, Jacobs

FEBRUARY 12 - Hand-processing/and contact printer workshop

Processing your own films in BW, contact printing; Darkroom protocol; hand painting techniques

Screenings: Films by Mary Beth Reed, Andrew Busti, Casey Koehler, Matthias Mueller

FEBRUARY 19 – CLASS WORKSHOPS ON TREATMENTS, SCRIPTS, PROJECT PROPOSALS

FEBRUARY 26 – BLACK BOX CLASS SYNC SHOOT: EX-1 DIGITAL CAMERA /AATON

POST PRODUCTION TECHNIQUES

MARCH 5 – Aesthetics of sound – Introduction to Pro Tools

Aesthetics of sound/image relationships
Films of Arthur Lipsett, Phil Solomon, Nina Fonoroff, AK Dewdney,
Sound collages by Wrick Wolff

MARCH 12 – VISITING ARTISTS from the Symposium

MARCH 19 – VISITING ARTISTS 2

APRIL 2 – PRO TOOLS 2

Working with multiple tracks, plug-ins, audio sweetening, compression, mixing for film and digital; special audio effects, reverb plug-in, etc. Working with Altiverb and Speakerphone. Using MIDI to create your own scores and sound design; working with Logic Pro 7 and MIDI controllers.

APRIL 9 – USING FINAL CUT PRO CREATIVELY

Using Final Cut Pro *creatively*. Everyone will contribute ideas to a groupthink demo.

APRIL 16 – USING AFTER EFFECTS AND OTHER DIGITAL TREATMENTS

APRIL 23 – ONE ON ONE: INDIVIDUAL CONSULTATIONS of WORKS IN PROGRESS

APRIL 30 – LAST CLASS – ROUGH to FINAL CUTS

MAY 3-6 – INDIVIDUAL MEETINGS TO SEE FINAL CUTS

***ALL FINAL FILMS MUST BE SEEN AND APPROVED BY ME BY THE DAY OF OUR SCHEDULED FINAL EXAM (WEDNESDAY, MAY 5, from 4:30 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.) OR IT WILL NOT BE SHOWN AT THE SCREENING. *EVERYONE* SHOWS UP FOR THIS FINAL CLASS REVIEW. I WILL NOT LET YOU SCREEN ANYTHING THAT I HAVEN'T SEEN – PERIOD.**

***Bring in your FINAL PROJECT work in progress materials at any time during the semester. Your work has priority, above all.**

Student show for Fine Art Filmmaking - Friday, MAY 7 in ATLAS 100 from 7:00 pm. -11:00 pm

CU Policies

Disabilities:

If you qualify for accommodations because of a disability, please submit a letter to me from Disability Services in a timely manner so that your needs may be addressed. Disability Services determines accommodations based on documented disabilities. Contact: 303-492-8671, Willard 322, or www.Colorado.EDU/disabilityservices

Sexual Harassment:

The University of Colorado Policy on Sexual Harassment applies to all students, staff and faculty. Sexual harassment is unwelcome sexual attention. It can involve intimidation, threats, coercion, or promises or create an environment that is hostile or offensive. Harassment may occur between members of the same or opposite gender and between any combination of members in the campus community: students, faculty, staff, and administrators. Harassment can occur anywhere on campus, including the classroom, the workplace, or a residence hall. Any student, staff or faculty member who believes s/he has been sexually harassed should contact the Office of Sexual Harassment (OSH) at 303-492-2127 or the Office of Judicial Affairs at 303-492-5550. Information about the OSH and the campus resources available to assist individuals who believe they have been sexually harassed can be obtained at:

<http://www.colorado.edu/sexualharassment/>

Religious Obligations:

Campus policy regarding religious observances requires that faculty make every effort to reasonably and fairly deal with all students who, because of religious obligations, have conflicts with scheduled exams, assignments or required attendance. In this class, {{insert your procedures here}}
See policy details at

http://www.colorado.edu/policies/fac_relig.html

Behavior in the Classroom:

Students and faculty each have responsibility for maintaining an appropriate learning environment. Students who fail to adhere to behavioral standards may be subject to discipline. Faculty have the professional responsibility to treat students with understanding, dignity and respect, to guide classroom discussion and to set reasonable limits on the manner in which students express opinions. See policies at

<http://www.colorado.edu/policies/classbehavior.html> and at
http://www.colorado.edu/studentaffairs/judicialaffairs/code.html#student_code

