

VAH 3393F – Special Topics in Art History – The Artist and the Archive



Susan Hiller, *Nine Songs from Europe 1991-1995*.

http://www.susanhiller.org/installations/nine_songs_more.html

Professor: Dr. Joy James
Class Day/Time: Thursdays 2:30 – 5:30pm
Location: VAC 247
Office Hours: Mon. 1:00 – 2:00pm (and/or by appointment)
Office: VAC 120
Phone: (519) 661-2111 Ext. 86198
Email: jjames53@uwo.ca

TA: Christina Battle
Office: VAC 240
Office Hours: Mon. 1:00 – 2:00pm (and/or by appointment)
Email: cbattle@uwo.ca

Course Description

Recent study has theorized the role of the archive in the late twentieth and early twenty-first century as having prominent conceptual significance and identifying a move away from narrative explanation to a less linear and more inclusive method of understanding individual and collective life. In the context of a series of readings, presentations and projects the course looks at how we might understand what has been referred to as the “archival turn” and what this has to do with the proliferation of uses and contestations of the archival model in modern and contemporary art. We will begin with an overview of the significant impact of photography on histories of the archive, and move on to focus on works based on the model of the archive in contemporary art across all media. The continued importance of photography’s aesthetic legacies to ways of seeing, sensing and making meaning of and in the world will be a topic of investigation throughout the course.

Evaluation

(Attendance at all classes is mandatory. Active participation and full engagement is required for successful completion of this third-year course.)

Attendance & Active Participation	20%	Weekly discussion assigned
Book Review	20%	Due date: October 2, 2017
Small Group Archive Project & Presentation	20%	Due date: October 30, 2017
Research Paper	40%	Due date: December 4, 2017

Textbooks

The texts for this course are available at the University Bookstore and on 2-hour reserve in Weldon Library under the course title and number.

- Ernst Van Alphen, *Staging the Archive: Art and Photography in the Age of New Media*, Reaktion Books, 2014.
- Charles Merewether, *The Archive*, Documents of Contemporary Art, MIT Press, 2006.

Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of this course students will be able to:

- conduct research using a variety of library resources and using these resources effectively in a research essay
- articulate an argument in writing, support the argument using appropriate evidence, address counter-arguments
- work collaboratively on a group assignment
- develop effective presentation and discussion leadership skills
- understand and articulate key critical, conceptual and theoretical frameworks employed in the study and analysis of archives
- apply theories and methods from the classroom in the real world context of existing archival holdings

Syllabus

Week 1 – Monday September 11 2017

Introduction to course

Week 2 – Monday September 18 2017

Required Reading:

Staging the Archive, "Introduction" pp. 7-20

The Archive, "Introduction" pp. 10-17

Week 3 – Monday September 25 2017

Required Reading:

Staging the Archive, "Emergence" pp. 21-52

Sigmund Freud, *The Archive*, "A Note Upon The Mystic Writing Pad 1925" pp. 20-24

Week 4 – Monday October 2 2017

Required Reading:

Staging the Archive, "Storage" pp. 53-91

Susan Hiller, *The Archive*, "Working Through Objects" pp. 41-48

Book Review Due

Week 5 – Monday October 9 2017
Reading Week No Classes

Week 6 – Monday October 16 2017
Required Reading:
Staging the Archive, “Listing” pp. 91-136

Week 7 – Monday October 23 2017
Required Reading:
Staging the Archive, “Classification” pp. 136-162
Allan Sekula, *The Archive*, “The Body and the Archive” pp. 70-75

Week 8 – Monday October 30 2017
Required Reading:
Staging the Archive, “Administration” pp. 163-186
Renée Green, *The Archive*, “Survival: Ruminations on Archival Lacunae” pp. 49-55
Raqs Media Collective, *The Archive*, “First Information Report” pp. 170-171

Week 9 – Monday November 6 2017
Small Group Archive Project & Presentation Due

Week 10 – Monday November 13 2017
Required Reading:
Staging the Archive, “Depletion” pp. 187-224
Paul Ricoeur, *The Archive*, “Archives, Documents, Traces” pp. 66-69

Week 11 – Monday November 20 2017
Required Reading:
Staging the Archive, “Reanimation” pp. 225-266

Week 12 – Monday November 27 2017
Required Reading:
Thomas Hirschhorn, *The Archive*, “Interview with Okwui Enwezor” pp. 117-120
Charles Merewether, *The Archive*, “A Language to Come: Japanese Photography After the Event” pp. 121-138

Week 13 – Thursday December 4, 2017
Individual Student/Instructor Meetings
Final Research Paper Due

Additional Readings (not required)
Patricia Levin and Jeanne Perrault, *The Archive*, “The Camera Made Me Do It” pp. 139-142
Akram Zaatari, *The Archive*, “Photographic Documents/Excavation as Art” pp. 181-184
Jayce Salloum, *The Archive*, “*Sans titre*/Untitled: The Video Installation as an Active Archive” pp. 185-193

Course Protocols

Office Hours/Email: Please come and see me or Christina Battle during office hours when you have course-related questions or concerns. I respond to emails within a 24hour period excepting emails sent after 4:00pm on Fridays, and on Saturdays and Sundays—I will answer mail sent during this period on the following Monday.

Late Assignment Policies: All assignments must be submitted when due unless there are mitigating circumstances. Arrangements for late assignments (with full documentation) must be made before the assignment due date. All other late assignments will be docked 5% per day.

Assignment Submissions: All materials submitted must be work done entirely by the student, expressly for this course. Please consult the Writing Centre if you have any confusion regarding definitions of academic honesty within University practices. It is the student's responsibility to be aware of policies governing academic honesty and be aware of what constitutes plagiarism and/or cheating. Writing Centre, UCC Room 217; <http://www.sdc.uwo.ca/writing>

Accommodations: All students who require accommodation are required by the University to register with the Student Development Centre and meet with a counselor. All accommodations are conducted in a fully confidential manner. Please let me know in the first two weeks of classes if you will be requesting accommodation. Student Development Centre, WSS Room 4111; Tel: 519-661-3031; www.sdc.uwo.ca

Mental Health:

"Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to Mental Health@Western http://www.health.uwo.ca/mental_health/ for a complete list of options about how to obtain help."

Assignment Descriptions

Attendance and Participation 20%

Students will be assigned to lead discussion of each week's assigned readings as part of the participation mark. All students are required to come to class each week fully prepared to discuss the assigned readings, and as the course proceeds, to develop connections across the larger discursive field in which the readings circulate. To this end, students are asked to prepare a brief summary of the important points to note in each of the readings and to situate it in the wider context of course required reading. Please place your name and date on the top of the summary sheets, and submit at the beginning of class.

Mark will be based on both in-class participation and the written summaries.

Group Archive Project and Presentation 20%

For this project the group will work with either an existing archive or construct an archive following their research interests. The assignment will provide an opportunity for working with the theoretical and material aspects of the archive covered by course lectures, assigned readings and guest lecturer presentations. Details of the assignment will be discussed in class.

Book Review 20%

Students are asked to review a text not assigned in the course that is associated with course content. This assignment will provide an opportunity for a close reading, and explication of how the text is positioned in the wider discursive field of the archive as a significant concept and area study for 21st-century art practice and criticism. Details of the assignment will be discussed in class.

Research Paper 40%

Working out of course lectures, readings, discussions, and presentations students will develop individual research projects in keeping with their particular scholarly and studio interests as they relate to the course focus. The research paper will present a clearly articulated argument or position that offers a critical discussion of the chosen topic. Further details of the assignment will be discussed at length and distributed in written form after the first month of classes.

**The University of Western Ontario
Visual Arts Department**

POLICIES**Student Conduct:**

All students will conduct themselves in a manner that will be consistent with the maturity and academic integrity expected of university students. Student conduct shall be consistent with the general laws of the community and with University regulations. Students shall show regard and respect for the rights, safety, and property of all members of the University community and are expected to act in a responsible manner within the University and the community at large.

Attendance:

A student who misses more than 15% of the course hours, without written corroboration for health or bereavement, can be debarred from writing final exams, or participation in final studio evaluations. Note that if a student consistently is absent from a 3-hour class for 1 hour, they will exceed the 15% cutoff and can be debarred.

Prerequisites:

You are responsible for ensuring that you have successfully completed all course prerequisites and that you have not taken an antirequisite course. Lack of prerequisites may not be used as basis of appeal. If you are not eligible for a course, you may be removed from it at any time, and you will receive no adjustment to your fees. These decisions cannot be appealed.

Plagiarism:

Plagiarism, which may be defined as “The act or an instance of copying or stealing another’s words or ideas and attributing them as one’s own,” will not be tolerated. (Citation excerpted from Black’s Law Dictionary, 1999, 7th ed., p.1170). (Refer to <http://www.westerncalendar.uwo.ca/2017/pg113.html> with regards to academic penalties for plagiarism.) This includes presenting the visual or aural work of another creator as your own. Visual or Aural Plagiarism may involve both hand-based media such as drawing, painting, printmaking and sculpture, as well as digital media such as photography, video and sound. It includes work subsequently manipulated or transferred between different media, as well as self-plagiarism – work submitted for assignments previously produced and graded for another course. Similar to textual plagiarism, all student work involving the visual or aural work of others must be appropriately cited/identified whether in print or orally. Failure to do so will lead to similar academic penalties as those identified in Western’s Academic Calendar.

Medical Policy:

Students seeking academic accommodation on medical grounds for any missed tests, exams, participation components and/or assignments worth 10% or more of their final grade must apply to the Academic Counselling office of their home Faculty and provide documentation. Academic accommodation cannot be granted by the instructor or department. See course outline for specific arrangements regarding less than 10% of assignments.

Mental Wellbeing:

“Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to Mental Wellbeing http://www.health.uwo.ca/mental_health/ for a complete list of options about how to obtain help.”

Building Access:

The John Labatt Visual Arts Centre will be closed at 10:00pm each night Monday to Friday. There will be no after-hour access for undergraduate students. The Centre is open weekends 12:00pm-5:00pm unless otherwise posted; access by side entrances only. Students should be prepared to vacate the building promptly at 10:00pm and 5:00pm. You must also sign-in with the building monitors when working in the workshop areas outside of regular office hours.

Permission re: Promotion

You grant permission for Western University to reproduce your name, information describing your artwork, representations of your work and any other information you have provided for the purpose of display, promotion and publicity either now or in the future.

By installing your artwork in the John Labatt Visual Arts Centre, you grant Western University an irrevocable, perpetual, royalty-free world-wide licence to photograph your artwork and use such photograph(s) for the promotion of your artwork and/or Western University, including, without limitation, advertising, display, editorial, packaging, promotion, television, social media, the Department of Visual Arts website, flickr,

Twitter, Instagram etc.). Students wishing to not have their work photographed should not exhibit it in the Visual Arts Centre, Artlab Gallery or Cohen Commons. As the area is open to the public, students, faculty, staff and other visitors will not be prohibited from photographing your artwork while on exhibit at the John Labatt Visual Arts Centre.

You otherwise retain all ownership in your artwork.

Artwork Installation Liability Release

You understand that the area where your artwork will be hanging or displayed is unsupervised and is in a part of the building that may be open to the public, day and evening, whether or not the building is open. Western University accepts no responsibility for damage to, or loss of, artwork at any time while on display or while being transported to or from the John Labatt Visual Arts Centre. By displaying your artwork in the John Labatt Visual Arts Centre, you accept all risk of loss or damage to your artwork. Western University does not provide insurance for the artwork on exhibition. **If you wish to insure artwork, it is your responsibility to do so.**

Removal

Western University reserves the right to dispose of artwork not picked up by April 15th of each year.

Please remember:

One of the most important resources for course counselling, special permissions, course changes, grade appeals, etc., is the Undergraduate Chair of Visual Arts, Professor C. Barteet (tel. 519-661-3440; vaugc@uwo.ca). Please note, however, that should you encounter any serious difficulties due to illness, family emergency, etc., you should consult the Academic Counselor for your Faculty. Ms. Amanda Green and Mr. Ben Hakala are the academic counselors in the Faculty of Arts and Humanities located in IGA Building, Room 1N20.

The Student Development Centre (WSS room 4111; tel: 519-661-3031; www.sdc.uwo.ca) offers a wide range of useful services including workshops on learning skills, career and employment services, and an effective writing program, amongst many more.

The D.B. Weldon Library offers orientation tours from the first week of classes until Thanksgiving, where you will get acquainted with the numerous research resources available. As well, the University libraries have an extremely useful website where you can search the library system, the databases, view your circulation record, renew materials, access your UWO e-mail account, and much more. Check it out at: www.lib.uwo.ca.

Financial Aid Services is your main source of information for OSAP, bursaries, loans, scholarships, and the work-study program which offer part-time positions on campus for Western students. Tel: 519-661-2100; e-mail, finaid@uwo.ca; or check out their website at http://www.registrar.uwo.ca/student_finances/financial_counselling.html

Updated August 21, 2017

The University of Western Ontario – Department of Visual Arts

Undergraduate Grading Guidelines - Art History

These guidelines are benchmarks that are not to be followed as rigid regulations. They will be adjusted as appropriate to take into account the level of the course and any specific instructions given by a professor. For example, grades in first-year courses are generally lower than in fourth year.

90-100 (Outstanding, A+)

The writing shows significant originality and exhibits a high degree of critical engagement. Sophisticated synthesis and analysis of the theoretical and conceptual dimensions of the topic are demonstrated. Mastery of complex material and ideas is immediately evident. The topic is treated with sensitivity and subtlety of thought. The quality of the background research is exemplary. Regarding research, all major secondary sources pertaining to the topic have been consulted and proper citation has been used.

80-89 (Excellent, A)

The writing shows originality and exhibits a high degree of critical engagement. Writing is probing through the use of comments and/or questions, and is clearly focused and logically organized. The quality of writing immediately engages the reader. Mastery of complex materials and ideas is demonstrated. The writing is of appropriate length, and demonstrates mastery of techniques so that results are meaningful and not simplistic. Regarding research, a majority of the secondary sources pertaining to the topic have been consulted and proper citation has been used.

75-79 (Very Good, B+)

The writing shows above average analysis, critical thinking and independent thought. Written claims are supported by ample evidence and the components of the topic are well-researched and presented. The work is addressed in reasonable depth and/or breadth and covers material appropriate to the course. Written analysis is organized around focal points and the development of the argument is easily followed. The writer demonstrates an above average ability to write in an intelligible style and to condense material meaningfully and with a concern for priorities of that material. Regarding research, a representative selection of secondary sources pertaining to the topic has been consulted and proper citation has been used.

70-74 (Good, B)

The writing shows a satisfactory attempt at analysis and critical thinking. Written claims are supported by reasonable evidence. The work is addressed in some depth and/or breadth, with references to the appropriate literature and course material. Written analysis is organized around focal points. The text is generally well written and well argued. Regarding research, a somewhat limited selection of secondary sources pertaining to the topic has been consulted and proper citation has been used.

60-69 (Competent, C)

The writing demonstrates adequate engagement with the topic. The writing is on topic and is a reasonable response to material covered in the course, but goes no further. Written facts are stated accurately; the quality of writing is sufficiently intelligible with enough elaboration and enough connections made between ideas to permit a reader to understand the point of the text. Regarding research, an insufficient number secondary sources pertaining to the topic has been consulted but proper citation has been used.

50-59 (Marginal, D)

The writing shows less than adequate engagement with the topic and with the material covered by the course. The writing is a less than adequate summary of sources and/or is considerably off-topic. Written facts are stated inaccurately or ambiguously; the writing style is difficult to follow; there is insufficient elaboration to permit reader's comprehension of relations among ideas; little judgment is shown in selecting detail for inclusion in the text. Regarding research, few secondary sources pertaining to the topic have been consulted; proper citation may or may not have been used.

Below 50 (Unacceptable, F)

The writing demonstrates a failure to comprehend the topic. Written material is disorganized and unintelligible. The work clearly does not meet the minimal requirements of the assignment. Regarding research, secondary sources pertaining to the topic have not been consulted and proper citation has not been used.