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office hours: t/th 12:00pm - 1:00pm @3224B or by appointment

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## THE IDENTITY OF OBJECT, PLACE AND SELF

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### COURSE DESCRIPTION

Over the course of ten weeks, students will develop skills in concept generation, visualization through observation, research and generating relevant, appropriate visual form in response to contexts and communication problems. Specifically, this course will research meaning and develop narrative of, and between, objects, places and self through various design assignments. First few weeks will focus on researching, archiving and analyzing material, collecting referential text and documenting the objects. Rest of the quarter will focus on developing narrative choosing specific form and design choices to enhance the value and a new found meaning. A display with five objects that clearly identifies the notion of place (ig. geographically location), and self with a matching catalog and (minimum) one another printed matter of your choice is required to successfully complete the course.

### STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

Students successfully completing this course should be able to

- 1/ Identify personal interest in the artmaking/design process
  - 2/ Research & Collect
    - \_ relevant history/orgin; dialogue between you and the seller - email exchange, search words; writings -books, journals, magazine/news articles; artists & their practice that associates with your personal interest and object.
  - 3/ Observe collected objects in macro/micro levels
  - 4/ Develop
    - \_ both conceptually and aesthetically strong storytelling and visual representation
  - 5/ Design & Develop
    - \_ publications presenting your research of objects
  - 6/ Evaluate and critique
    - \_ give & receive constructive feedback
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### PROJECT DESCRIPTION

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#### [ASSIGNMENT 1] PRESENTATION: "Who Am I?"

**READ** *The Meaning of Things: Domestic Symbols and the Self* By Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi & Eugene Rochberg-Halton and **PREPARE** 5 min presentation about your interest to narrow and specify researching and purchasing process.

- \_ visit your portfolio to find a shared theme in your art making process
- \_ define your identity (background, gender, language, color, what constructs the self?)
- \_ use your findings to generate methodologies to assist your purchasing process

Your slides must be saved as LAST,FIRSTNAME.PDF and uploaded in the class drop folder > presentation **before the class starts.**

\* Read *The Meaning of Things: Domestic Symbols and the Self* By Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi & Eugene Rochberg-Halton uploaded in the class public folder

## [ASSIGNMENT 2] RESEARCH + COLLECT

How do objects acquire meaning? How is the Self constructed? The answer to both questions is the same: through cultivation. Cultivation is the investment of attention in an object or activity, and that in turn invests an object with meaning through a transfer of psychic energy (taking the metaphor of valuable goods into the domain of emotional energy). The idea of "flow" – the age-old idea (given a queezy new agey spin) of maximizing enjoyment and productivity in life by cultivating enjoyment in things that also help you achieve your goals, and by negotiating a balance between the familiar/boring and the un-familiar/anxious. Cultivating meaning into objects is a cultivation of Self because our sphere of objects is an external reification and representation of Self. Things that we possess and cherish help us to create order in consciousness, leading us to self-awareness about our values (e.g. photos, Bible, heirloom, kitchen, Porsche), and our history (e.g. trophies, yearbook, old chair). The reifying power of things is to encapsulate who we are (echo) or who we want to be (reinforce). Things have the power to change us, amplify our achievements, reify vague possibilities.

Why? Because things have presence and permanence.

- 2007 hugo liu book review 'The meaning of things'- Csikzentmihalyi and Rochberg-Halton

### BUY 5 SMALL OBJECTS

- \_ objects must be purchased through **second-hand Online websites** such as e-bay, Craigslist (Los Angeles and vicinity)
- \_ each object should be size of your hand
- \_ total the sum of the amount spend exceed over \$50 (including shipping)
- \_ \* not including the final project budget
- \_ all objects must be purchased and shipped by January 31st

It is entirely up to you how to make the purchases. Either you let randomness be your guide and browse the Internet, and just hope your eyes will fall onto 5 objects, or *you can come up with a strategy to purchase them based on the use of the media*. It is strongly encourage to create your own methodology discover through your presentation that can assist you to collect your objects to regulate how you make the purchase. For example, you could look at the map of LA and look for one or five different neighborhoods where these objects should be located, or collect objects of same categories of color and material. For each of the objects, collect the sellers' information/descriptions and their images and your Online receipts. Also, archive any e-mails, text messages and make notes where the objects came from, map of the sellers/locations, and why you are attracted to the objects and what made you purchase them. Perhaps, you may want to create a set of questions to interview the sellers to answer.

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## [ASSIGNMENT 3]

### ARCHIVE + INVESTIGATE

VISUAL: f.e. digital photography f.e. > top / bottom / front / back / sides  
colors (in pms numbers, analyze the color palette):

TEXT: f.e. title of object  
description  
land of origin  
material  
weight  
year produced  
price  
function  
location obtained \*  
meaning: (iconic, symbolic, semiotic)

TYPOGRAPHY: what typeface(s) fit the series of 5 objects?

**ways to do this:** keep everything that comes with your objects. See if you can find similarities in your 5 objects, sometimes 3 out of 5 seem to connect and you can push the other two to go along in that narrative. Sometimes there is a connection in form, or in material, or in atmosphere, or in time-period etc. Be 'scientific' and precise, experiment with shape and color research, be consistent. The purpose is to constantly compare the objects with each other. Observe each objects as if you are 'a curator in a (Natural History) museum'.

\* read [Looking at Artifacts, Thinking About History](#) (pg 1-7) By Steven Lubar and Kathleen Kendrick

\* use [Accession\\_Form.pdf](#) (Provided in the class public folder / website) to archive your objects specs

[ASSIGNMENT 4] FINDING REFERENTIAL TEXT + IMAGE

Find newspaper articles, passages out of literature (book chapters, book pages, fragments, movie dialogue etc.) for each object - make sure the text somehow is a tight fit with your objects.

**ways to do this:** google, visit the library and scan your book shelves, think of novels you have read, movies you have seen, songs you have listened to; is any of your objects a main character or prop in a written narrative?

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[ASSIGNMENT 5] THE STILL-LIFE

Research still life paintings and meaning of objects/artifacts, based on that knowledge stage and take a still life digital photograph of your 5 objects in two ways: Objective + Subjective

**ways to do this:** the instructor & T.A. will help you take objective photographs of your objects in-class (FEB 02). Usually still life paintings represented the senses; something you can hear, something you can see, something you can taste, something you can touch. They also presented symbols of mortality; live and death. Based on gathered knowledge what would be the composition and setting for your 5 objects?

\* read *Ways of Seeing* By John Berger \*  
*On Photography: In Plato's Cave* By Susan Sontag (PDF provided in the class folder / website)\*

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[ASSIGNMENT 6] CATALOG

Create a catalog with all your collected information of objects (text + photography) to be displayed along with your objects for the final class exhibition. Your catalogue must consist of: title, found and written texts, photographs (found/subjective photography of your objects as a whole or separate), a table of content, a short introduction (an objective) of your book, and citation.

**ways to do this:** use all your typography and design knowledge and make editorial decisions for setting the grid, choice of typefaces, use of imagery, choice of binding, etc.

\* The Chicago Manual of Style **must be used** for all citations.

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[ASSIGNMENT 7] FINAL EXHIBITION

**DISPLAY:** For the display of objects, you can either purchase an appropriate display cases/box (f.e. from Container Stores), or fabricate one yourself.

**EXHIBITION:** You must create another printed matter to display along with your catalogue and 5 objects (f.e. make a poster to announce the exhibit of your objects or a set of post-cards to invite people to the show). Consider how it will fit into the rest of your work and objects.

Works in all mediums are considered. You are encouraged to work in mediums that allow you to hone in on your conceptual and visual sensibilities, and where you already have proficiency working in. Look for inspiration from artists mentioned at the beginning of the course or finding of your own.

**PROCESS:** Research, concept development, creative direction, design direction, communication strategy, prototype development, design refinement, and production.

ALL WORK MUST BE OF EXHIBITION QUALITY!

## GRADING

10%	READING REFLECTION(S)
10%	STILL-LIFE (Subjective & Objective Photography)
50%	Part 1. CATALOGUE (Research / Writing / Concept / Design / Print) Part 2. PRINTED MATTER (Concept / Design / Publication)
20%	FINAL EXHIBITION - Process + Quality (Display Design / Presentation)
10%	PARTICIPATION Punctuality, focus, articulation of concepts, and contribution to class discussions, 1:1 meeting, critique are all part of class participation.

Mid-semester evaluations will be given via 1:1 meeting to help students improve performance and make progress. Although a grade may not be given, the comments will indicate your standing on an average-below or above scale. It is imperative that you understand your evaluation and act on any suggestions or recommendations given.

## STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES

**Assignments:** Students are expected to complete weekly, out-of-class assignments. Assignments are a continuation of the work being done in class. There are also few readings that requires 250 (+/-50) words reflections that will help students assist their understanding of, and conceptualize their projects. Good work ethic and consistency in your project development process will result an A in this course.

**Participation:** Actively participate and draw out ideas or concerns of self/others during the critique; Re-visits issues or ideas that need more attention; Mature attitude to give and

take critical feedback of your work. Learn from your peers; the class should be a collaboration.

**Communication:** IF ANYTHING IS UNCLEAR OR YOU COME ACROSS OTHER PROBLEMS, PLEASE COMMUNICATE THIS TO THE INSTRUCTOR DIRECTLY AS SOON AS POSSIBLE!

## CLASS RULES

Prepare for each class & be on time.

No texting or phone calls in class.

No Food (Drinks are okay).

No checking personal e-mails, social media during class.

Respect everyone in the class and their opinions.

All assignments must be completed on time.

NO EXCEPTIONS.

## ATTENDANCE

Classes start at 9:00am SHARP. You are responsible for any missed class or assignments due on the day you are absent and for assignments given on the day you missed. The class T. A. will be fully in charge of recording attendance.

Any *unexcused* absences will reduce your grade by a half grade down (ex: an A would become an A-), 3 unexcused absences result in a FAILING GRADE. If you are more than 10 minutes late to class, you get a tardy. Two tardies equal one absence, which counts as an unexcused absence. If you are more than 30 minutes late, you are welcome to join the class but you will be marked absent.

An emergency or illness is the only acceptable excuse and an official letter that can prove your excused absence must be provided to your T.A. Please inform the instructor and T.A. of your intended absence prior to the class meeting. If there is an emergency and you will be late (or have to leave early) or absent from the class, please email to schedule notify the situation. **Please note that you must attend the final critique & exhibition and document your project to complete the course.**

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## NOTE:

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## SCHEDULE

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week 01	T	JAN 10	Introduction
	TH	JAN 12	PRESENTATION: "Who Am I?" <b>DUE</b> READING <b>DUE</b>
week 02	T	JAN 17	<b>VISITING ARTIST'S PRESENTATION</b>
	TH	JAN 19	1:1 Meeting to discuss purchasing process + objects
	F	JAN 20	MATTHEW MANOS's workshop from 2-5pm in 1250 Broad Art Center * mandatory attendance requested by the department
	S		<b>FIELD TRIP</b> to MUSEUM OF BROKEN RELATIONSHIP @12pm 6751 Hollywood Blvd, Los Angeles, CA 90028 * Bring your student id card & admission fee of \$12
week 03	T	JAN 24	<b>[ASSIGNMENT 3 ARCHIVE/RESEARCH YOUR OBJECTS] DUE</b> +tbc READING <b>DUE</b>
	TH	JAN 26	<b>[ASSIGNMENT 4 FINDING REFERENTIAL TEXT/IMAGES] DUE</b> +tbc
week 04	T	JAN 31	<b>[ASSIGNMENT 2 BUY 5 SMALL OBJECTS] DUE</b> + Group Discussion
	TH	FEB 02	Introduction of Subjective & Objective Photography In-class Shooting Session for <b>[ASSIGNMENT 5 Objective Photography]</b> READING <b>DUE</b>
week 05	T	FEB 07	<b>[ASSIGNMENT 5 THE STILL-LIFE - Subjective] DUE</b> Introduction of book design + researching typography
	TH	FEB 09	<b>VISITING ARTIST + 1:1 MEETING*</b> <b>[ASSIGNMENT 6 CATALOGUE - CONCEPT &amp; CONTEXT] DUE</b>
week 06	T	FEB 14	<b>[ASSIGNMENT 3 + 4 must be refined] DUE</b> <b>Mid-term Evaluation 1:1 Meeting</b>
	TH	FEB 16	PRESENT Creative/Design Direction for <b>[ASSIGNMENT 7 EXHIBITION ]*</b>
week 07	T	FEB 21	<b>VISITING ARTIST + 1:1 MEETING *</b> <b>[ASSIGNMENT 6 CATALOGUE] 75% DUE</b>
	TH	FEB 23	Introduction of object + artist Layout proofs (dummy) + Papers + Binding techniques <b>DUE</b>
week 08	T	FEB 28	1:1 Meeting to discuss final exhibition design REFINE catalogue + other designed publication layout proofs
	TH	MAR 02	<b>[ASSIGNMENT 6 CATALOGUE] DUE</b>
week 09	T	MAR 07	Refining final exhibition design materials + catalogue <b>[ASSIGNMENT 7 EXHIBITION] 80% DUE</b>
	TH	MAR 09	Display Box & Installation <b>must be near completion</b>
week 10	T	MAR 14	Final 1:1 Meeting
	W	MAR 15	Installation*
	TH	MAR 16	Final Critique
	<b>tba</b>		Final Exhibition Opening