

ENG 4146: Experimental Experiments**meeting times: M/W 9-11, Rolfs 115****professor: Roger Beebe****email: rogerbb@ufl.edu****phone: 392-6650 ext. 245****office hours MT 8 Per., Turlington 4370 (or by request)****description:**

While every film and video production course I teach focuses narrowly on experimental film and video, this one goes way beyond those. We're headed for the farthest reaches of experimental practice. We'll cover lots of advanced (and primitive) techniques for making moving images, mostly on celluloid. We'll make praxinoscope strips and learn how to build our own praxinoscopes and zoetropes. We'll learn to hand process hi-contrast film in tupperware, build our own contact printers using sync blocks, flashlights, and toilet paper tubes, make Rayographs, and use an optical printer. We'll curate a show of found oddities from the cast offs of the public library system and make a bunch of flickering oddities of our own (from flipbooks to films). And then we'll have a giant show at the end with all of the stuff we've done that'll be something more than just a bunch of people sitting in the dark and looking at your work.

grading:

I know some of you care about grades. And the school requires me to give grades. But this class will be more difficult to grade than any that I've ever taught. Part of what I'll base your grade on is your effort. There are two ways I can measure this: first, your class participation (and you should be engaged and contributing EVERY class meeting); second, the labors you put into each project. That latter will be a little harder for me to measure, but I think I should be able to get a sense from the results if you've phoned it in during the process. So effort will account for half of your grade. But the other half will come from the success or failure of those efforts. Sometimes it will be easy to break this half down into two components as well: first, the technological (i.e., how well you mastered the tools we use for each project) and second, the aesthetic (i.e., how interesting/good/beautiful/&c. the projects are). But sometimes the technological won't be very much of a challenge (like with the thaumatropes); at other times, it may be harder to assess what a "successful" result is (in aesthetic terms). But we'll do our best to arrive at a fair grade based on all these criteria—and I do mean we. I'm going to have you all do mid-term self-assessments and a final self-assessment. I'll then fire back with my thoughts about your self-assessments, so the grading process will be a kind of negotiation (but obviously I can't pretend it's a democracy—I will have the final say).

I want you to take risks this semester & I don't want you to be afraid of failure, but experiments don't always work out like we hope they will. My advice to you is to start experimenting early so that you'll have time for a failure or two on your way to something more successful.

absences:

Here's the policy: NO ABSENCES. We're learning something new every class meeting, and what you learn each class is something you can't just learn from reading someone else's notes or just sitting down for a brief meeting with me. There are only 15 class

meetings—I can be a little more flexible about the screenings—so I don't think it's really too much to ask. You'll be graded down ½ letter grade for each absence, starting with number 1. I'll make exceptions only for ruptured appendixes or other life-threatening emergencies. Can't handle this policy? Then drop the class.

For the screenings, I'll allow two absences before I start penalizing. Do note though that some of our screenings will be at alternate venues & on different nights (three Tuesdays for RISK Cinema, Thursday through Sunday [Feb. 17-20] for FLEX, etc.), so plan accordingly. Those non-Wednesday screenings are really going to be among your most valuable learning experiences all semester. You'll see a ton of work on film (16mm, super 8mm, 35mm even) and will get a broad sense of both experimental film history and the contemporary “state of the art” from them, so really get ready to put all else aside when those come up. For FLEX, I'm only going to require that you attend 4 of the 10 screenings, but I really think you should consider attending all 10. This is the advanced class, and I presume you're all here because you want to be, right? If not, there were A LOT of people desperate for your seats, so let me know A.S.A.P.

WEEK-BY-WEEK BREAKDOWN

WEEK ONE (Jan. 5): Hi!

WEEK TWO (Jan. 10/12): Introduction to sequential images

M: Thaumatrope due/in-class critique; introduce praxinoscope

W: Alan Berliner, “Everywhere at Once” and “City Edition”; Bruce Conner, “A Movie” and “Ten-Second Film”; Scott Stark, “AMBBCBSS”; Tomonari Nishikawa, “Market Street”; Peter Kubelka, “Unsere Afrikareise”

WEEK THREE (Jan. 17/19): Second critique!!!

M: MLK Day—no class

W: Praxinoscope strips due—in-class critique

WEEK FOUR (Jan. 24/26): Distressed film/direct animation

M: David Gatten, “What the Water Said”; Lauren Cook, “Altitude Zero”; Naomi Uman, “Removed”; Len Lye, “Rainbow Dance”; Norman McLaren, “Lines Horizontal”; Harry Smith, “Early Abstractions”; Stan Brakhage, “Mothlight”; Rafael Montañez Ortiz, “Golf” and “Cowboy and ‘Indian’ Film”

T: RISK CINEMA!!!!—Peter Hutton!!!! (7 p.m., Harn Museum)

W: NO CLASS (RISK Tuesday)

TH: Bill Daniel!!!! (9 p.m., Top Secret Space)

WEEK FIVE (Jan. 31/Feb. 2): More distressing/directing

M: “TB TX DANCE”; Lewis Klahr, “Her Fragrant Emulsion”; Stan Brakhage, “Black Ice”

W: NO CLASS (make up for Bill Daniel)

WEEK SIX (Feb. 7/9): in-class critiques

M: IN-CLASS CRITIQUE (Distressed film/direct animations due)

W: IN-CLASS CRITIQUE

WEEK SEVEN (Feb. 14/16): RISK & FLEX doubleheader—PLUS Phil Solomon class visit!!!

M: Phil Solomon visit!!!!

T: RISK CINEMA!!!!—Phil Solomon!!! (7 p.m., Harn Museum)

W: NO CLASS (RISK Tuesday)

TH-SU (Feb. 17-20): FLEXfest 2011!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

WEEK EIGHT (Feb. 21/23): Hand processing (and Ray-o-grams!)

M: FLEX post-mortem; Man Ray, “Emak Bakia”; Naomi Uman, “Leche”

W: Lawrence Brose, *De Profundis*

WEEK NINE (Feb. 28/Mar. 2): Optical printing

M: tutorial; screen Martin Arnold, “pièce touchée”; Peter Rose, “Analogies”; Scott Stark, “Angel Beach”

W: Bill Morrison, *Decasia* OR public screening of found films???

WEEK TEN (Mar. 5-13): SPRING BREAK—NO CLASS

(F-SU [Mar. 11-13] Brakhage Symposium @ CU-Boulder)

WEEK ELEVEN (Mar. 14/16): Contact printing

M: optical printing exercises due; screen Peter Tscherkassky, “Outer Space”; Cade Bursell, “Skate”; Scott Miller
W: Gustav Deutsch, *Film Ist.* (1-6)

WEEK TWELVE (Mar. 21/23): optical printing exercise critique

M: IN-CLASS CRITIQUE
T: RISK CINEMA!!!!—Jeanne Liotta!!!! (7 p.m., Harn Museum)
W: NO CLASS (RISK Tuesday)
(W-SU [Mar. 23-27]: Ann Arbor Film Festival!!!!)

WEEK THIRTEEN (Mar. 28/30): Experimental animation

M: Robert Breer, “Fuji”; Jodie Mack, “Yard Work is Hard Work”; Frank Mouris, “Frank Film”
W: Barbara Hammer, *Resisting Paradise*

WEEK FOURTEEN (Apr. 4/6): politics?

M: Santiago Alvarez, “79 Springtimes of Ho Chi Minh”; Travis Wilkerson, “An Injury to One”
W: Jon Jost, *Speaking Directly* OR alternate date for found film show???

WEEK FIFTEEN (Apr. 11/13): rough cuts

M: IN-CLASS CRITIQUE
W: IN-CLASS CRITIQUE

WEEK SIXTEEN (Apr. 18/20): final show preparation

M: Final show prep
W: Final show install

Final screening: Date TBA, Top Secret Space