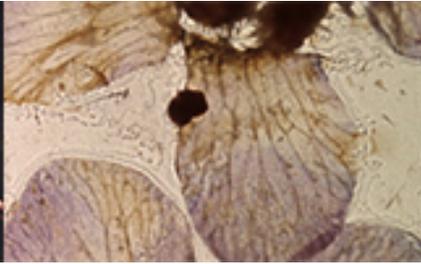


Krzysztof Wodiczko



Stan Brakhage



Pipolotti Rist

## THE ART OF EXPERIMENTAL FILM AND VIDEO: ARTS 391

PROFESSOR: CLAUDIA ESSLINGER OFFICE HOURS: 9:30-10,1-2 MWF AND BY APPOINTMENT PBX 5465  
CELL: 740-504-5896 WEB SITE: [ESSLINGERCLASSES.COM](http://ESSLINGERCLASSES.COM) FOR INFO, EXAMPLES, LINKS.

In this course you will experiment with the creation, manipulation and exhibition of digital film projects. In doing so you will continue a tradition from early filmmaking, where abstract montage, surreal juxtapositions and obscure narratives reflected innovations in the art, science and politics of the time. Like many current artists and filmmakers, we will follow the path of these historical trajectories by using contemporary technologies and concepts for acquisition, development and distribution of our work. Although experimental work can be widely defined, we will emphasize the aspects that separate it from mainstream commercial work. Demonstrations of a wide range of equipment and software will be provided from low-tech to high-tech, but in addition you will be expected to be problem-solvers and researchers as well, and to share your discoveries with your colleagues. Discussions of historical/cultural forms, will offer a context for the assignments. Frequent critiques will offer important feedback. Any additional talent you bring from other creative abilities from music to dance to writing creatively will be useful in this class.

### Evaluation Criteria and Class Goals:

- An approach that is visually (formally), intellectually (conceptually) and emotionally **compelling**. Is there something that initially draws the viewer in to want to see more?
- Originality/ creativity/ **innovation**/ surprise/ cleverness. Does the work avoid clichés and pat expectations? Did you take a risk ...step away from your comfort zone?
- **Conceptual depth**, sophistication or complexity that allows a **sustaining** interest by the viewer. Did you develop metaphors, irony and mystery in your work while avoiding clichés? Does the form of the piece support the content? Is the work resolved, finished?
- A **commitment** that involves creative problem solving, development of technical skills on your own as well as through class, attention to detail, meeting deadlines, showing artistic integrity and effort, a willingness to learn from others including faculty and students, generosity in participation in group critiques and discussions, respect for others (electronic etiquette), attendance during class and TA hours, and caring for equipment.
- Artistic Integrity: An awareness of the **appropriate audience/ assignment/ social context** of your work as relating to other artists and non-artists, those of your generation and beyond, what era you are working within, what cultural knowledge you can refer to and what will be lost on the viewer. The

piece should be appropriate for experimental galleries and/or video festivals. It should be a creative response to the guidelines of the assignment.

#### **Class Etiquette:**

- **Critiques:** You don't need to raise your hand to comment, and I encourage you to participate. Make sure to speak loudly enough for everyone to hear and give everyone a turn.
- **Bodily care:** Please plan to eat before and after class but not *during* class. If you must have a snack for health reasons, please speak to me about it and *never* eat near a computer. A closed container of water may be placed below your desk for urgent care. You may leave if you need the restroom without asking but please be as quiet as you can.
- **Internet/phone/ Computer work:** *Please put your computer and phone to sleep for critiques, demos, discussions.* In a class where you are sitting in front of a powerful computer all the time, with your phone in your pocket, it is very tempting to use that technology when we are meant to be doing other things. We all get *very* distracted by mouse clicks or texting when someone is presenting something or when we are having a critique. Please do not continue to work on your project when we are looking at someone else's work, instead put your computer to sleep. Take notes in your journal. Being a full participant in the critique observation and discussion is part of what I evaluate you on. Email may be done before or after class, or during a break. If you are waiting for something to render, please plan other aspects of your project during wait time rather than get distracted by e-communications.

#### **Instructional Aides:**

You will be processing a lot of information technically and developing conceptually. To aid this process, I have many alternatives that I expect you to take advantage of:

- TA's are available Sunday, Tuesday and Thursday from 7:30-10pm. Please attend one night a week. Attendance will be taken and will affect your overall grade.
- Online videos and handouts are available at [esslingersclasses.com/](http://esslingersclasses.com/) password: bexleyhall. You are expected to view these videos while we are working on that particular topic and be ready for a pop quiz any time! If you are absent, watching these will HELP though not replace the class demonstration.

**Communication and grading:** Grading comes in the form of comments and number grades. I really value talking to you in person, writing emails in response to your work and I only give grades as a supplement to these more important tasks. Nevertheless, these can tell you how I think you are doing in relationship to my overall expectations which are based on a history of knowing what students can do, what the rest of the class might be able to do in the allotted time, and what I think you personally are capable of all in relationship to the above mentioned goals. Please do not compare your grades with others! There are many reasons for variations in grades. What is taking a risk for one person might be comfortable and predictable for someone else with more experience. Good work comes in many forms! Please take initiative in scheduling conversations with me if you don't understand something. It is your responsibility to catch up on work you have missed. Communication is key to understanding! To do the best in this class you should start work right after the assignment is given so that you can revise as needed. . If you miss a demonstration/ lecture, you will have to work with a TA and will not be able to visit the material as thoroughly.

**Grades will use the 100% scale, but will be weighted by percentage of final grade, depending on the intensity of the project. For instance: a shorter project may be worth 5-10% of the final grade where as a longer project could be 30%.**

**The evaluation criteria will all be taken into account for each due date, not just the final result.**

91-100 (A range) The high end of this indicates exceptional work to which nothing can be added, on time, following the assignment and with special insight, effort, risk-taking and creativity. All of the evaluation criteria are met. Excellent participation in critique and discussions.

81-90 (B range) This indicates above average work, competent, safe and interesting but still lacking something or it could be innovative work without a high enough skill level. Good comments during critique and discussions.

71-80 (C range) This indicates average work, average effort, basic amount of skill and creative ideas. Low participation in critique and discussions. Questionable preparation.

65-70 (D range) The work is handed in but shows less than acceptable effort creativity and skill. Little to no participation in critique and discussions. Not prepared for class.

Up to 65 (F range) Little effort, skill, imagination, not prepared, etc.

**Due Dates:** Projects are due *at the beginning of the class period on the date of the progress or final critique*. A project is considered late if it is not ready at that time and will receive an 0 until submitted. The 0 will then be averaged with your grade if the piece is handed in BEFORE the next scheduled critique. If you have an excused absence coming up on a critique day, the work is due **before** you leave. Most projects will have one or more progress critiques for which you will receive credit toward the final score. ~~The final project is due before the last day of class, not during final's week. The final portion for the semester is due the next class day after the final~~  
**Resubmission:** You may always improve and resubmit work and the new grade will be averaged with your initial grade if it is submitted within a week and before the next critique. This doesn't apply to the final project. That is due the last day of class.

**Attendance Policy:** Attendance in this class is **mandatory** because you cannot make up lost days by just reading or any other independent work. The class time is full of demonstrations, presentations, critiques and workshop time. If you miss demos you may never catch up and not know how to use the equipment. Workdays in class allow personal assistance from the professor on assignments and should be prepared for (you should work outside of class to be at the next stage of work, ready for assistance. Expect to spend at least 10 hours per week outside of class). You will always do better on an assignment if you are ready for the workdays in class (have completed more work on your project). Video screenings are wonderful opportunities to inspire your work and describe the nature of the assignment. Students who miss these invariably don't do as well on the associated project. For all of the above reasons, I am strict about attendance and accountability. If you DO miss a class **you are responsible for finding out what was covered and learning from others as much as possible**. I cannot recreate the class for you.

After three (3) unexcused class absences I will begin to **lower your final grade for the course by three points (out of 100) for each additional absence**. Unexcused absences should be saved for occasional minor illnesses and you should still notify me through a call or email before class. Two times late (10 min after class starts) will count as one absence. Excused absences are only given for illnesses that require a doctor, death in the family, Kenyon sanctioned activities such as athletic events, etc, and must be okayed **before** the missed class whenever possible. Do not leave for these events early. All work must be **handed in before** an excused absence if it is due on the date of the absence or it will be considered late. If you have more than three excused events that pull you away from class, you will have to start using your three allowed unexcused absences (for instance, if you have 5 scheduled events, two of them will use up some of your allowed unexcused absences.) Excused absences do not include taking a friend to the airport, leaving early for break or the common cold.

**Collaboration:** You all have different aptitudes and experiences. Working together will improve all of your pieces. You are expected to help each other out and to pull your part of the load. Groups will also be important at idea sessions and critiques. It is here that feedback from your peers becomes collaborative. Your participation at critiques and discussions will influence your grade on each project.

**Equipment policy:** You are expected to care for all equipment both on the premises and off. If something breaks or is lost while in your care, you are responsible for it financially and you must tell me immediately. You may sign

