



(Franz West's Adaptives)

Introduction to Performance Art

Class# 1748 PERF 401 001

February 12, 2012–April 22, 2012

Sunday 10:00 a.m.–1:00 p.m.

Instructor: Sean Ward

Students in this course will explore a variety of ways to use their bodies as instruments to create performance-based artworks. Through individual and group exercises, class participants will develop ways of taking action, responding to feelings and external stimuli, and using the imagination to create pieces of art that can be performed. Students will investigate the importance of writing and documentation and will experiment with the use of objects, costumes, and movement as elements of their performances. Final individual and collaborative pieces will be performed in a special event for family and friends.

Contact: TBA**Course Description**

In this course you will use their body as an instrument to create artworks. You will develop ways of using the imagination to be ridiculous and curious while creating serious pieces of art that tell us how we position ourselves in the world. Taking inspiration from a simple walk, you will invent performance pieces that respond to the sounds, sights and colors. Re-interpreting them into movement, composition and objects used in performances.

To take action and respond to feelings through the body as art, is a difficult task but working as a group you will support one another in your efforts towards this goal. You will learn the importance of documentation and writing in a collaborative performance where each person will use objects, costumes and movement to tell us about something larger than ourselves. The final project will be one designed by you where you collaborate to create a performance narrative using objects and costumes. The story can be fantastical, absurd or even humorous.

Required Activities Outside the Classroom

- Readings given as homework
- Writing assignments in relation to readings and current projects
- Journaling in notebook
- 10 questions prepared for the next class based on readings, 10 vocabulary words based on readings for next class. (These count towards passing the class. If you miss them you must make them up to get a 'passing' grade)

Activities in the Classroom

- Students will write and answer prompts at the beginning of each class through writing. This writing will help guide their thoughts throughout the class.
- Students will learn how to effectively use the video and camera equipment.
- Students will learn a basic understanding about performance, its various uses through history and today.
- Essentially the entire class requires peer to peer engagement, performing in front of someone requires a patience and acceptance from the audience. This will be developed through discussion of how we should behave to do such that. Along with casual critiques, I want to create a relaxed and open environment for students to be performing in. This also comes with the collaborative assignment where they must rely on each other.
- We will have lectures, visiting artists and presentations on artists, demos on software and equipment and critiques.

Equipment

Digital Video Cameras

Digital SLR Cameras

Digital Point-n-Shoot Cameras

Basic Painting and Drawing Supplies

Scrap Material (Cardboard/Fabric)

Equipment Students Need to bring to the Classroom

Notebook

Pencils - A range of drawing pencils

Erasers

Pens/Markers

*Digital Camera (if you have your own, or a smartphone with a camera would be useful for this class)

Learning Outcomes

Students will learn these key terms:

Performance: Creating a performance around an object can give it a history and narrative. The idea of role playing or acting out a scene is important in transformation and I want the students to learn that it is a possibility to use what they have made, like objects, images, and painting as tools in video, photography and performance work.

Process / Artistic Practice: The students will learn what an artistic practice is and the definition of process in relation to this, by examples of artists at work in their studio, slide lectures on significant artists with distinct practices, and through visiting artists.

Translation: The skill to translate the physical into language is an important skill that artists must learn today. Writing is a must for artists to give insight into their own practice as well as developing a way to participate in contemporary discourse.

Empirical / Experimentation (Trial and Error): The students will create an understanding of empirical learning. Through observation, and experience students will develop a sense of the trial and errors awarded them in the artistic process and how mistakes can lead them into unexpected territory.

Observation through Writing: Writing is essential to understanding the actions we take in our art and what the results are. Students will use writing to document walks, things seen and to sketch out ideas. This class will help emphasize writing as a potential drawing practice. Helping to edit and shape the imagination and speculation in a performance.

Body as an instrument of drawing: As a conceptual approach to drawing in a space with one's body. We will take walks to initiate our process to performance. We will record our walks through photography, video, and writing. We will discuss how the body is a way to compose and direct viewers attention.

Documentation: I want to show students that documentation is not only a way to show your work but it can be the work as well. Here we will use photography and video to translate and transform

objects into photographic works and use video as a way to produce narratives. The students will learn that documentation is not the end of the artistic process.

Collaboration: Students will learn the need to be organized, to be a leader, and to communicate clearly with those they are working with. This is essential to performance in groups and even individual projects where you need someone to help with props, recording and documentation.

Intro to Performance Art Semester Overview Spring 2012

This schedule is JUST an overview and is subject to change.

Week	Dates	Day	Reading for following class	Assignment	In-Class Topic
1	February 12	Sunday	Verb List Compilation: Actions to Relate to Oneself, (Richard Serra) 198 Methods of Nonviolent Action (The Albert Einstein Institute)	Syllabus What is Performance Art? *Activity (Baldessari singing Introductions) Introduction to Digital Cameras *Activity (Photos of verbs and faces) Movie: Bill Cunningham New York	What is Performance Art
2	February 19	Sunday	Lygia Clark: In Search of the Body (Guy Brett)	Field Trip: A Walk	Searching
3	February 26	Sunday	The Dialectics of Inside and Outside, The Poetics of Space (Gaston Bachelard)	Intro to Assignment While working Movie: La Ribot Distinguida *Present	Assignment Perform
4	March 4	Sunday	Bruce Nauman, January, 1972, Interview with (Lorraine Sciarra)	Introduction to Video Cameras *Activity How to film Performance (using last week's performance)	Framing

Week	Dates	Day	Reading for following class	Assignment	In-Class Topic
5	March 11	Sunday	Generic Objects (Gean Moreno and Ernesto Oroza)	Field Trip: In Search of an Object Take Object Create Performance About or Around it Clips: Franz West's Adaptives	Searching
6	March 18	Sunday	Helio Oiticica's Parangoles: Body-Events (Anna Schober)	Design and Create your own objects and a performance surrounding them (should be simple, possibly found)	Creating
7	March 25	Sunday	The Method of Physical Actions (Stanislavski System)	Finish designing and creating *Present / Ask someone to video your performance	Perform
8	April 1	Sunday	Performances: Belief in the part one is playing (Erving Goffman)	Class will be divided into groups, collaborative performances based on your own objects/ performances *Visiting Artist?	Collaboration
9	April 8	Sunday	Work on Collaborative Performance Ideas and develop ideas in notebook	No Class	No Class
10	April 15	Sunday	Postproduction, Culture as Screenplay: How Art Reprograms the World (Nicolas Bourriaud)	Work on Collaborative Performances While working Movie: Jack Smith: The Destruction of Atlantis	Collaboration
11	April 22	Sunday		Final Performance *fellow help document each other's work	Final



Notebook Questions

(Edited Source: Paul Thek, Artist's Artist edited by Harold Falckenberg and Peter Weibel) These are questions that are to be answered as assignments in your notebook. I will check that you are answering the questions, but will not read your answers - this is for yourself. It is important to understand where you are and in context of your own life when looking at art. Please date the page in your notebook of each round of questions.

1978-1979 Paul Thek taught a graduate seminar and 1980-1981 an undergraduate seminar at the Cooper Union School of Arts in New York. He prepared the following questions for his students. Name, age, birthdate, place of birth, position in family, nationality, religion, education, hobbies, career plans, parents' education, parents' birthplace, parents' religion.

Where do you now live? With whom? For how long? What income do you have? From what source? What property do you own?

What are your requirements in a friend? Lover? Mate?
What kind of art do you like? Painting? Sculpture? Music?

What do you read? How often? Do you buy books?
What is your favorite color?
What are your politics?
Have you ever been seriously ill?
Serious accidents?

What do you do on a date?
What is the purpose of dating?
Do you believe in premarital sex?
What happens after death?

Tell us about other members of your family.
Tell us about a close friend.
Tell us about someone who inspires you.
Tell us about the most exciting thing you ever saw, did.

How many rooms are there in your home?
How many floors? What floor do you live on?
Do you have your own room? Do you share it? With whom?
What does your room look like?
On what do you sleep? In what? In what position?

Do you take baths or showers? Do you use perfumes or deodorants?
What style of look do you prefer?

Are you interested in sports? Which? How often?

Do you believe in abortion? Do your parents?

What is your worst physical feature? Your best?

What is the main source of difficulty between you and your parents?
Teachers? Friends?

What annoys you the most in others?

What kind of teacher do you prefer?

If you were a teacher, what would you propose?

How would you grade your students?

What is eternity? What is love? What is art?

What is a symbol? What is religion? What is psychology?

Who are your role models?

Who is the person closest to you at the moment?

Who is the person physically closest to you at the moment?

What in your life is your greatest source of pleasure?

How do you know you like someone?

How do you know that someone is interested in you?

How do you know that you are happy, sad, nervous, bored?

What does this school need? This room? You? This city? This country?

What is an abstraction?

What is a mystery religion?

What would it be like if you behaved with absolute power?

Redesign a rainbow.

What is an icon?

Why does an icon have to be human?

What is sacred? Profane?

What is the most beautiful thing in the world.

Design something to sell on the street corner.

Design something to sell to the government.

Design something to put on an altar.

Design something to put over a child's bed.

Design something to put over your bed when you make love.

Design a black mass out of any materials you can find.

Design a work of art that fits in a matchbox, a shoebox.

Design a new clock face.

What is the difference between philosophy and theology?

What is the purpose of art?

What does 'spiritual' mean to you?

What is the most difficult thing in life for you?

Can art be useful in dealing with this difficulty? In what way?

What is 'service'?

What is the purpose of society? of government?

What is the surest way to happiness?

What is attractive in a woman. A man?

What are the qualities of physique most attractive?

What are the personality problems of being an artist?

What is it like to be an American in the 21st century?

What is our unique role?

Who is Obama?

What languages do you speak? Spoken at home?

What religious articles do you have in your home? Your family home?

Illustrate your strangeness.

Design a box within a box to illustrate selfishness.

Design a throne.

Why are you here?

What is a shaman?

What do you think has been the greatest hurt, mental and physical, that you suffered?

What do you think are the qualities of a life fully lived?

Can you suggest a project, for yourself or for a group, or for any number, which might deepen your sensitivity to time?

What is greed?

What is verbal knowledge?

What does tactile mean?

Can you show me an example of tactile sensitivity in your personal life?

How much time should you work on a class project?

How much time should you think about it? Discuss it?

What do you think of money? Make a structure explaining to me your concept of money or out of money.

Should art be useful? Useless?

What is pablum?

What is capitalism? Communism? Socialism?

What is leisure?

What is waste?

How can we humanize the city?

How can we humanize Harold Washington? How can we redesign Harold Washington?

What should the student lounge look like? Where?