The alternative screen is the fine arts and intellectual tradition in the movies. It's where we track the leading edge of moving image practice, both cultural and technological. It's where we see the most radical and inventive movies (film/video) ever made, movies that spring from artistic, cultural, and political desire, with monetary reward and popularity being secondary or negligible concerns - not commodities for mass consumption, they are the true independents. – Gene Youngblood

Course description: Experimental film/video represent profound artifacts of human activity that are both expressions of radical imagination and barometers of the human condition.

This course will survey a wide range of experimental cinema (film/video) from the 1920’s to the present with a central focus being artistic practice in the context of historic, cultural and political concerns.

The various histories of experimental film/video speak to a range of topics that are fundamental to the limits and possibilities of what a movie might be. And, within these topics issues such as whose voices are heard and who is represented within particular histories are central ideas that we will study.

The class will consist of screenings, readings, discussions, and lectures. Students will be evaluated through written assignments, exams, and class participation.

Note that the film/video screenings have not been arranged chronologically. Rather, in an attempt to establish more profound relationships, screenings/discussions for this course have been structured thematically.

Attendance: Attendance will be taken in every class.
**Students who miss two or more classes will be automatically dropped from the course.
**Important: Being late twice equals a single absence.
**Every unexcused absence will lower your semester grade by 5%.

Assignments: There will be one in-class exam (see Schedule of Events) and two assigned papers (see due dates under Schedule of Events and attached description of paper assignment). Late papers will not be accepted and exams cannot be made up (unless prior arrangements have been made with the instructor).

Required readings: A packet of photocopied readings will be the textbook for this summer session. Readings are available through the Professor Publishing Service at the Baytree Bookstore on campus. Note that each reading from the attached bibliography has been assigned a number. That number is listed on the particular date for which the reading is to be discussed in class.
Your semester grade will be calculated as follows (assuming you do not miss more than two classes (see above):
(Exam 1 + Essay Assignment #1 + Essay Assignment #2 + class participation)/4 = Semester Grade (adjusted per absences). Note that class assignments AND class participation are each worth 100 points.

Communicating with the instructor:
Emailing is the most efficient way to contact the instructor. When emailing ALWAYS type the course name/number in the subject line or your mail will be automatically deleted. Be respectful in mailing the instructor. If your communication fails to follow these basic acts of civility, they will be interpreted as failures to participate in the course effectively and will adversely impact your semester grade.

Plagiarism/Copyright issues:
When writing papers it is imperative that students either develop original ideas in their essays and/or cite ALL sources for material not their own. Note that using other peoples’ ideas without acknowledging the source will result in a failing grade for that particular essay. Additionally, be advised that this kind of behavior can get you expelled from the university.

Classroom Etiquette:
*Cell phones MUST be turned off during class.
*Text messaging – Students are NOT allowed to text message during class and if they are caught messaging they WILL be asked to leave the classroom.

Other Class Requirements:
*Students who do not submit all assignments will not pass this course.
* You will be spending many hours outside of class working on projects... If you are not prepared to budget your time in an effective manner do not take this course.
Schedule of Events:


**W 8/2 A Sense of Place:** screen *A Man With A Movie Camera* by Dziga Vertov, (30 min clip) 63 min, 1929, *Strike* by Sergei Eisenstein, 82 min (screen 5 min clip), 1925, *Berlin: The Symphony of a Great City*, 65 min, 1927 (5 min clip), *Rien Que Les Heures* by Alberto Cavalcanti, 45 min, 1926 France (clip), *Manhatta* by Charles Sheeler/Paul Strand, 6 min, 1921, *Walking Under The Sun* by Diana Fonseca, 3 min, 2007, discuss readings 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 5a, 5b


**M 8/7 Surrealism and the Fantastic:** play Pixies “Debaser,” screen *Blood of a Poet* by Jean Cocteau, 50 min (screen 20 min. clip), 1930, *Page of Madness* by Teinosuke Kinugasa, 60 min (screen 10 min clip from rescue sequence), 1926, *Un Chien Andalou* by Salvador Dali & Louis Bunuel, 16 min, 1929, Sins of the Fleshpoids by Mike Kuchar, (clip), 97 min, 1965, discuss readings 11, 12, 13

DISCUSS EXAM (next class)!!
Film 136A  Experimental Film & Video  
Film 136A Summer 2017  M W F  9-11:30am  Human and Social Sciences room 250, Session 2, July 31-Sept. 1  
Bryan Konefsky  bkonofsky@gmail.com  mobile 505-235-1852


DISCUSS PAPER #1 (due 8/16) – NOTE FILMS STUDENTS CANNOT WRITE ABOUT.


RETURN EXAM TO STUDENTS (leave 15 minutes at end of class for discussion)

W 8/16  Identity Politics/Looking At Ourselves#3 of 3:  screen  Fireworks by Kenneth Anger, 14 min, 1947,  The Art of Memory by Woody Vasulka, 37 min, 1987,  Drink Deep by Jem Cohen, 9 min, 1991,  L’Atalante by Jean Vigo (5 min clip), 87 min, 1934,  All My Life by Bruce Baillie, 5 minutes, 1966, discuss readings 9, 16, 17, 18

PAPER #1 DUE AT THE BEGINNING OF CLASS TODAY.
**Film 136A Experimental Film & Video**

Film 136A Summer 2017  M W F  9-11:30am Human and Social Sciences room 250, Session 2, July 31-Sept. 1

Bryan Konefsky  bkonefsky@gmail.com  mobile 505-235-1852

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**F 8/18 Archival Apocalypse #1 of 2:** screen *Decasia* by Bill Morrison, 60 min (15 min clip), 2003, *A Movie* by Bruce Connor, 10 min, 1958, *A Movie* by Jen Proctor, 12 min, 2010, *End of Reason* by David Byrne, 5 min, 2003, *Outer Space* by Peter Tscherkassky, 10 min, discuss readings 19, 20

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RETURN PAPER #1 TO STUDENTS.

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**W 8/23 New Documentary #1 of 3:** screen *Mountain State* by Bill Brown, 18 min (5 min clip), 2003, *I Don’t Touch The Gold* by Paulina Pisarek, 51 min, 2013, discuss readings 21, 23a

Write final assignment on blackboard – due in class 9/1 (SASE), 2 readings/2 films

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**M 8/28 New Documentary #3 of 3:** screen *The Gleaners and I* by Agnes Varda, 82 min, 2000

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**F 9/1 * Essay Assignment#2 DUE* (late papers will not be accepted)**

Bibliography

1. “We: Variant of a Manifesto” (excerpt) by Dziga Vertov
2. "Filmdrama as the Opium of the Masses," by Malcom Le Grice, Abstract Film and Beyond.
3. “Art Worliding Experimental Film” by Fred Camper
4. "Hot Video Art Leaves Collectors Cold" by Alexander Peers from The Wall Street Journal
5. "Blown off the Screen" by Gene Youngblood, Taos Talking Picture Festival Program 1996.
5a. “The Amplification of Sound”
5b "Woman With The Movie Camera Redux" by Jennifer Proctor, River Branch, Kyja Nelson
6. Interview with Jem Cohen
8. "Metaphors on Vision (excerpt)" by Stan Brakhage, from Film Theory and Criticism.
9. A Critical Cinema 2 (interview with Bruce Baillie)
10. "Rage and a Haircut" by Dave Hickey, from Art Issues Sept., 1995
11. “The Art of Cinema” (excerpt) by Jean Cocteau
12. “First Manifesto of Surrealism” (excerpt) by Andre Breton
13. "Storytelling Animals" by David Hoppe from New Art Examiner
14a. “Visual Pleasure in Narrative Cinema” by laura Mulvey
15. “Cinematography: The Creative Use of Reality” by Maya Deren
15b. “Everyman: His Own Historian" by Carl Becker
16. Kenneth Anger reading
17. "The Politics of Video Memory: Electronic Erasures and Inscriptions" by Marita Sturken
20. A Movie (excerpts from Film Art)
22. "Grandma's Story" by Trinh Minh Ha, Blasted Allegories
23a. “Making Memories” by Patricia Phillips
Essay Assignment #1:
(essay assignment #2 – TBA)

Due date: see schedule of events... Late papers will NOT be accepted (unless prior arrangements have been made with the instructor).

Structure: 3-4 pages, typed, 12 point, san serif (in other words - no Old English fonts), double spaced, single sided..... please make sure that your name and email is on each page.... Also I do not want footnotes... This is an essay assignment, so if you need to reference something please do so within the body of the paper.

Assignment: Choose any one movie (screened in class) and discuss it within the context of your experience of this course, the lectures, readings and discussions (a subjective response to the readings, movies, discussions)....

Gentle Warning: I will announce certain films/videos that you CANNOT write about!!!

Important: To contextualize your argument within the content of this course note that you must reference 2 relevant readings within the body of your essay. Also note that this is an essay assignment not a research paper – as such, please reference your sources (the readings) within the body of your paper – no footnotes are necessary.

Format:
Pick a specific moment in one of the movies we have screened in class. Describe the moment accurately (a moment may be a single line of dialogue, a specific group of images, or a specific relationship between sound and image etc... To be clarified in class).

As you carefully describe the moment you should discover that this exercise leads you to more general themes and ideas explored in the video you are writing about. In other words your "moment" should be exemplary in some way.

This will then become the jumping off point to relate your "moment" to meaning(s)/issues that are central to the entire movie. This relation may be direct or, it may be somewhat oblique...

Please relate the video to readings, lectures and/or discussions that intersect with the ideas/themes you are exploring. Integrate these observations/relations into your essay. Establish this relationship in a meaningful way that supports your writing. Do Not Use Footnotes...

Important: As you are writing the paper look critically at your own observations. Ask yourself why your paper is developing as it is? Do your ideas need more contextualizing and/or explaining? Did you casually gloss over an important point that, perhaps, needs to be expanded? Be careful not to generalize (broad, sweeping, unqualified remarks)... Be specific, concise and brilliant... Oh, and good luck and may your printer never run out of ink.