ART IN THE REAL WORLD:
Artists in residence in non-art settings
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COURSE OBJECTIVES

What roles might artists play beyond established art settings?

Many contemporary artists while rejecting the traditional forms of art (ie paint on canvas, carved stone etc.) have accepted the traditional role of the artist: (a person who creates objects, installations or events in art settings such as galleries, museums and alternative spaces.) Yet some of the most interesting work being done by artists today takes place outside of art venues. This seminar may help widen future options for art students by examining non-traditional roles for artists, as well as help define the philosophical underpinnings of their practice.

The seminar will give experiential knowledge into a variety of questions including: What is art? How does art function in society? What are some new ways that artists can function in society? How does an artist get permission to do strange things in public? Does anyone outside of school care about what I’m doing? What am I in for when I leave school?

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Students will be asked to create their own artist in residency in a non-art setting. Each student will work as an artist in their setting for the duration of the semester and document the process.

• One student may choose a busy street corner for their residency. They would then spend a prescribed amount of time each week on that street corner working in some way as an artist. This may take the form of anything from soliciting stories from passersby to keeping the corner immaculately clean to doing chalk drawings to interfering with the normal flow of foot traffic.
• Other students may choose the context of jobs they already hold. A student working in a movie theatre approaching their job as part of their art practice might begin to see ticket stubs as sociological relics rather than plain garbage and work with them as art.
• An ambitious student may try setting up an actual artist in residency program at a place like Pac Bell Park or Golden Gate Park.
•Settings for projects will not be limited to places. Students may choose a certain community for the setting for their work. Someone may spend their residency creating work in collaboration with homeless people or legal secretaries all over the city.

Student will be encouraged to choose a venue for their residency that has a personal resonance with them or their work.

Students will work with the physical, social, and conceptual elements of their setting as their primary materials; and be open to responding to changing features they may encounter.

Each student will be faced, as an artist, with a real life situation and be asked to understand the relationship that their work has to the real life context that they have chosen for it.

COURSE STRUCTURE
The structure of the seminar will fall into four general sections:

1) CHOOSING A SETTING FOR RESIDENCY.
We will discuss how possible settings relate to each individual student’s interests. Possible legal, ethical and logistical issues relating to each setting will be discussed.

2) BACKGROUND.
While students are mulling over what setting they should choose for their residency, we’ll look at the work of a variety of artists and groups who have worked in real life settings. We will also briefly look at how artists in other cultures function in relation to the rest of their communities. The following are some possible examples of artists and topics:

Gian Lorenzo Bernini    Mel Chin          *Fluxus          Javanese Shadow plays
Leonardo da Vinci        Peter Fend       New Realists      Siberian Shaman
Daniel Spoerri          *Mierle Laderman Ukeles  *Situationists
Yves Klien               *Agnes Denes       Act Up
*Suzanne Lacy            *Allan Kaprow     Project Row Houses
David Hammons           *Helen and Newton Harrison

* writings by these artists among others will be distributed and discussed.
3) WARM UP PROJECTS.
Before committing to the final “residency”, students will do smaller projects to help them explore various aspects of working directly with a specific place. Later we will gather as a group sharing our experiences.

4) WORKING WITH THE CONTEXT.
Through site visits and critiques students will discuss situations that they confront as they work with their chosen site. Special attention will be given to the effect their work is having on its settings. Throughout the quarter each student will determine the best way to translate their work to the rest of the class for periodic critiques whether studio presentations documenting work, site visits to actual settings, performances, etc.

5) DOCUMENTING THE WORK.
The unique problems of documenting this type of work will be thoroughly discussed throughout the class. Each student will document what they did over the course of the semester in a form appropriate to their project. We will have an exhibition of the documented work at the end of the seminar.