

Photography Studio

ARTS 3008 (3 credits)

Czech Republic: Studio Arts (Creative Writing, Contemporary Dance, and Photography)

This syllabus is representative of a typical semester. Because courses develop and change over time to take advantage of unique learning opportunities, actual course content varies from semester to semester.

Description

This class is devoted to practice in experimental photography with an emphasis on techniques such as montage, collage, assemblage, stop motion photography, and photogram, all of which have deep roots in Czech visual arts history. Students take part in workshops in artist studios or other workshops, attend exhibitions and visit photographic archives, keep a sketchbook and journal and present their photo experiments in a public gallery space. They also meet with contemporary visual artists and photographers that work with experimental and multi-media methods as well as curators or other specialists to gain insights into the Czech visual arts scene and the different ways in which Czech artists engage in public discourse around politics and social justice topics.

Learning Outcomes

By the end of the intensive course, students will be able to:

- Demonstrate an informed knowledge of the contemporary visual arts scene and its roots in the Czech avant-garde;
- Develop knowledge and practice in experimental photography techniques and prepare a gallery exhibition;
- Analyze the ways in which select visual arts reflect and engage current Czech social and political debates.

Instructional Methods

The teaching approach of the lecturers is to introduce students to various techniques and provoke their creative potential by allowing each student to work independently with the themes and ideas drawn from the physical environment of the city itself through observation, documentation and processing. Students are required to keep sketchbooks, with notes documenting their explorations of place, and exhibitions or other events attended. The experiential approach allows students to experiment and create in the context of a holistic and immersive, intensive learning experience requiring observation and reflection in the field, independent and group creative work, and presentation and analysis.

Language of Instruction

This course is taught in English

Required texts: This is a short and intensive studio course with limited readings. Select readings from the books below available at the school will be provided.

- Birgus, Vladimír and Jan Mlčoch. (2010). *Czech Photography of the 20th Century*. Prague: Kant.
- Birgus, Vladimír. (2002). *Czech Photographic Avant-Garde, 1918-1948*. Cambridge, Massachusetts & London, England: MIT Press.
- Students are encouraged to review the following websites in advance of arrival:
 - House of Photography: <http://en.ghmp.cz/house-of-photography/>
 - Langhans House and Archive: <http://www.langhans.cz/dum/>
 - Studio of Josef Sudek: <https://www.atelierjosefasudka.cz/en/>
 - Fotograf Gallery: <http://fotografgallery.cz/en/>

Required Technology: Students are welcome to bring their digital or SLR cameras, but this is not a requirement due to the experimental nature of the course and the possibility to work with your telephone camera or equipment available for borrowing at the school.

Assessment: The final grades are based upon Fieldwork Journal, Final exhibition and reflection, timeliness and active participation.

Module 1: Orientation & Introduction to contemporary Czech arts & culture (4 days) The orientation & introduction module is devoted to an overview of the contemporary Czech arts and culture today including the visual, literary and performing arts and the ways in which current public discourse in politics and social justice are mirrored and engaged through the arts. A lecture on the experimental techniques and the intellectual and conceptual legacy of the Czech avant-garde to visual arts today and guided tours and discussions at the House of Photography, the Langhans photography archive or The Museum of Decorative Arts.

Module 2: (12 days)

This module comprises three 3-day workshops in experimental methods such as photogram, collage & assemblage, and stop-motion animation under the guidance of artists using these methods in their own work; journaling and fieldwork experiences such as artist studio visits, gallery talks. The module will also include an excursion to regional city such as Brno to visit contemporary arts spaces and photography collections.

Module 3: (2 days)

Students make a selection of work and install it in a gallery, take part in a final open critique on the process and results and present their sketchbooks.

Evaluation and Grading Criteria

Description of Assignments

Portfolio: Conceptualization and Creation of Artwork (50%)

The assignment requires the preparation, collection of materials and conceptual development of artwork that will be created in three intensive workshops under the guidance of contemporary artists devoted to photogram, collage, and multi-media techniques. Concrete

tasks for collecting materials in the field and other preparatory work will be assigned in advance of each workshop.

Sketchbook (30%)

A sketchbook that includes drawings, notes, clippings or other documentation of fieldwork and site visits as well as documentation of at least five exhibitions attended upon recommendation of the lecturer.

Final Exhibition (20%)

Preparation, design and installation of a final group exhibition based upon a selection of work created in workshops and field exercises.

Assessment:

Portfolio	50%
Sketchbook	30%
Final Exhibition	20%

Grading Scale

94-100%	A
90-93%	A-
87-89%	B+
84-86%	B
80-83%	B-
77-79%	C+
74-76%	C
70-73%	C-
67-69%	D+
64-66%	D
below 64%	F

Expectations and Policies

- Show up prepared, on time, and appropriately dressed for your internship. Comply with organization rules.
- Have progress report assignments completed on schedule and done accordingly to the specified requirements. This will help ensure that your assignments are returned in a timely manner.
- Ask questions when in the field/office. Engage yourself in everyday life of the organization and initiate interaction.
- Comply with academic integrity policies (no plagiarism or cheating, nothing unethical).
- Respect differences of opinion (those of your internship supervisor and colleagues, classmates, lecturers, local constituents engaged with onsite visits). You are not expected to agree with everything you hear, but you are expected to listen across difference and consider other perspectives with respect.

Please refer to the SIT Study Abroad Student Handbook for policies on academic integrity, ethics, warning and probation, diversity and disability, sexual harassment, and the academic appeals process.

Disability Services: Students with disabilities are encouraged to contact Disability Services at disabilityservices@sit.edu for information and support in facilitating an accessible educational experience. Additional information regarding SIT Disability Services, including a link to the online request form, can be found on the Disability Services website at <http://studyabroad.sit.edu/disabilityservices>.

