

## SYLLABUS:

*ASAG 3310, 4310, 5310: BUILDING AND IMAGINING THE LANDSCAPE*

Arrival Thursday, 31 May 2012 – Departure Friday, 29 June 2012

INSTRUCTORS: JAY SULLIVAN, PHILIP VAN KEUREN

A intensive studio experience in painting, sculpture, drawing, and printmaking, with focus upon the concreteness of the built and natural, physical forms and resources specific to the landscape of Northern New Mexico and the more numinous but no less important phenomena of space and light. The course will emphasize the development of forms and meanings from the landscape through painting, sculpture, drawing, and printmaking—working toward imaginative (not medium stringent) invention within individual studies. Studies in printmaking will be primarily intaglio (acid and drypoint) etching, monotype and woodcut.

The teaching emphasis will be on encouraging individual dialogue towards the development of issues raised in preliminary studies—particularly through drawing—into coherent thematic studies across the spectrum of media. Students are expected to pursue and resolve multiple solutions to problems. Class discussions will focus on “landscape as subject”, considered metaphorically and literally. Artistic approaches that are indigenous to the area, as well as contemporary trends, will be examined as deemed relevant. All media and conceptual approaches are supported, though with certain restrictions due to environment and extent of facilities. Field trips to artists’ studios, historic sites, museums, galleries, slide lectures, and visiting lecturers are scheduled throughout the workshop, as time will permit.

Workshop participants are expected to observe and study the **unique visual qualities of the New Mexico built and natural environment** and to consistently search for, and develop, fully realized artistic responses to the stimuli they encounter.

## COURSE OUTLINE:

Work will begin at 8:30 AM in the Artbarn, and generally ends at 5:00 PM. Short working critiques each evening of the day’s work are the norm. Studios are open 24/7 and extensive amounts of studio time should be devoted outside of the normal workday. This is a necessity in order to make real progress in the short Summer I semester.

**Week 1:** The purpose of the first week is to organize a studio practice within the environment of Fort Burgwin, to introduce you to the Ft. Burgwin landscape and the surrounding geographic, geologic, and cultural area of Taos, and to begin an extensive series of studies and small projects that will allow you to identify motifs and ideas. Site visits: White Place, Kitchen Mesa (Ghost Ranch), confluence of the Rio Grande gorge and Red River gorge, Bandolier National Monument, Millicent Rodgers Museum. Selected Readings: Barry Lopez, Desert Notes; Wendell Berry, Traveling at Home; Martin Heidegger, “Building, Dwelling, Thinking”; Gaston Bachelard, The Poetics of Space, and The Poetics of Reverie; Lucy Lippard, Lure of the Local; John Berger, Selected Essays, as well as additional critical readings and special topics as found useful and meaningful. A useful array of books and catalogues is also kept in the Artbarn library for use by students.

Projects: Drawing: One-hundred drawings in 5 days. Collection of forms, materials, and motifs. 24-drawing Project. Night drawing at the Rio Grande gorge bridge area.  
Printmaking: Introduction studio for woodcut, intaglio and drypoint  
Sculpture: Mapping/Drawing the land: window, distance, level.  
Group projects on the perception of site. Introduction to woodcarving and joinery; casting and forming the land.

Critique #1: June 8, Friday, 9:00 AM-5:00 PM

**Week 2:** Site visits to Santa Fe, Chaco Canyon, with additional small group visits to sites appropriate for individual projects. Development of thematic drawings within sketchbook, and as a series of more extended and fully developed works.

Projects: Printmaking: Discussion of individual themes and development of extended series within woodcut or drypoint (15-20 prints).  
Sculpture: Students will develop one object-based investigation at large scale (3-5 ft.) and one site-based work. Development of site plans and models.  
Painting: Development of sustained series and 2 large canvases.  
Drawing: Development of larger scale works as well as more focused studies at smaller scale. Investigations of media are encouraged.

Critique #2: June 15, Friday, 9:00 AM-5:00 PM

**Week 3:** Development of individual projects. Students should arrange critique with each Instructor (sign-up sheet posted). The goal of this week is to develop work sustained both in conception and in physical execution.

Note: All final work must be complete by 8:30 AM on Monday, June 25.

Installation of final show on Monday June 25, starting at 8:30 AM until finished.

Final exhibition all day June 26 with evening reception coordinated with Taos Colloquium.

Grading:

Grading is based on: Quality of work and thought, including that which extends beyond visual art; Degree of energy, hard work, initiative, and enthusiasm; Degree and quality of contribution to discussions in class and in critiques; Oral presentation and written expression; Attendance; Ability to work independently; Interest in and depth of knowledge of works of art, traditional and contemporary. Assessment of work is made during performance in the studio, in independent projects/assignments, and in critiques.

**Final Critiques (exam): June 27 all day.** take-down June 28.

Final studio cleanup, and departure preparation.

June 29 (Friday)-depart Taos in morning.

**Please Note:** The expectations for time spent in the studio are extremely high, particularly regarding sustained effort in development individual projects. Students should be aware that extra time is required to secure materials, obtain tools, develop sites, etc. Certain things may not be readily available in the immediate Taos area. It is the responsibility of each of you to inform faculty of your work location if not immediately adjacent to the artbarn or auditorium. Discuss your thinking with us often.

Students in directed study should meet with faculty regularly (every 2-3 days) to discuss the progress of their work. Scheduling such meetings is the sole responsibility of the student.

Areas off campus, such as sites for painting and drawing, are not considered safe for individual work. Students should work in pairs whenever possible, and should inform faculty of their location, expected departure and arrival times. **NO EXCEPTIONS.**

Students working on campus with site-specific work must obtain a “building permit” which designates the location and type of work, signed by 1 art faculty, 1 archeological faculty, and the director of Ft. Burgwin.

Selected Readings for Taos, 2011  
Van Keuren  
Sullivan

They will form the core of our initial discussions about working, thinking and looking.  
There will be additional readings as deemed relevant to our discussions.

Lopez, Barry. From Desert Notes get the book if you can—try half-price.  
Barry, Wendell. Traveling At Home  
Heidegger, Martin. “Building, Dwelling, Thinking”  
Berger, John. “On Drawing” (from Selected Essays, available in paperback)

Materials, supplies and other things to bring. We have specified them by medium, since we have a number of different directed studies. If you have any questions or special needs, contact Jay Sullivan (214-768-2489) or Philip Van Keuren (214-768-4439)

You should bring as much with you that will allow you to work as possible, emphasizing drawing. For painting bring a full set of paints and grounds. Investigate fast driers. For printmaking, bring your own plates and tools (no bigger than 16 on one dimension). For sculpture bring tools and safety equipment to supplement what is there. All students should have gloves and all should have suitable clothing, shoes, etc for extended work outdoors in a dry, high altitude environment. **Hats are a necessity.**

All students should have:

1. Drawing materials: sketchbooks (8 1/2 x 11 or bigger for Philip, small, spiral bound sketchbooks for Jay), charcoal, assorted pencils (HB up) erasers, both plastic and kneaded, assorted wash brushes, pen holder with nibs, small mixing tray, white gouache, masking tape, clips, and anything else you like.
2. Good leather work gloves.
3. A pocket knife
4. A rain parka
5. 2 water bottles (1 liter plastic)
6. light long-sleeve shirts
7. hat, sunglasses, sunscreen
8. Sleeping bag if you want to go out camping and tent.
9. Day pack or other carrier that will hold materials/water/food when hiking

Additionally for sculpture:

1. Linesman's pliers, hammer, foldable pruning saw, nylon string, eye protection, two chisels (1 and 2"), utility knife
2. Any individual tools as needed for specific media.

Additionally for painting:

All the paints you need, brushes, knives, etc. Colored gouache or egg tempera, Gesso or oil primer, linseed oil or other media (liquin helps drying) plenty of panels, such as luan plywood or masonite, canvas and stretchers if you want that surface, utility knife.

Additionally for printmaking:

We will have about 5 sets of woodcut tools. If you want to use copper for drypoint or etching, bring copper, etching needles, scraper, burnisher, etc. (i.e. your own tool set). Any specific papers that you might want to use.

**More notes**

This course is intended as an individually based extended investigation and use of the landscape as subject, with you as the instigator. Our view of the subject is extremely broad, extending from more traditionally picture-based drawing and painting to site specific, conceptual or performative investigations. We do some group work, visiting sites, exhibitions, etc, or tackling a common problem (drawing is constant, for everyone). We are available for extensive individual discussions and work. The primary "teaching" takes the form of critiques, approximately once/week, during which we look at everything everyone has produced.

As a result, the course depends on a great deal of individual initiative, which is behind our desire that students be more advanced. You will need initiative to experiment and initiative to sustain. Often you will be confused or unsure, and will need to keep working. The working is as much like the problems an artist faces in the studio (not school) as we can make it. We bring some resources (mostly books and some slides, for discussions) and the artbarn has studio space, French easels, and a small print shop. The fort has approximately 600 acres of fairly varied terrain to **use and investigate**.

Traditionally the student makeup of the Taos class/group is extremely diverse, with some interested in painting, some in sculpture, some in ceramics, etc. While we will be seeking to

provide some common threads, the emphasis will very much be on individual work, where a series of investigations are brought to culmination in a sustained investigation.

Two qualities are essential to this effort: one is simply repetition—the ability to go into a problem again and again until it begins to take on a new form; the second is openness to any and all sources and stimuli. As you do this, we will be emphasizing scale—whether through large drawing, large painting, or sculpture. Rather than making “pictures”, our desire is for you to attain a scale that takes on the quality of experience. Thus, in bringing materials, **bring a lot of them.**

A second question is site. The artbarn allows one the ability to set up a studio space, and to work on the back patio. Students often become trapped within these spaces, however—the landscape remains “out there” and we observe it, removed. Ideas of site involve seeking out the particular qualities and spaces you are interested in and immersing yourself within them. Site is also, often, a question of time. Early morning is extremely different from noon. Night is different from day. **Places change with time.**

Most of the resources you will have, other than the materials you bring, are natural. This is not a place where you easily find ready-made materials or forms. Thus, the ordinary language of things is important: how things lie, pile, group, grow, etc. Often a simple inventory of things is more eloquent than their manipulation. There are many sources for this type of investigation. One of the most important is the strategy of indigenous peoples who have learned to live within the landscape, primarily contained within their architecture, but also within their approaches to materials in a variety of other art forms. Others include the recent work of such artists as Richard Long or Andy Goldsworthy, who have made the landscape their subject through physical manipulation of the environment. Lucy Lippard has written extensively on this subject, and other texts, such as Land Art, should be consulted. Finally, the theoretical investigation of landscape and nature, as well as our inhabitation of it, can be accessed through such writers as Barry Lopez, (Desert Notes); Wendell Berry; Martin Heidegger, (“Building, Dwelling, Thinking”). **Go read, look, and think.**

**Disability Accommodations:** Students needing academic accommodations for a disability must first contact Disability Accommodations & Success Strategies (DASS) at 214-768-1470 or [www.smu.edu/alec/dass.asp](http://www.smu.edu/alec/dass.asp) <<http://www.smu.edu/alec/dass.asp>> to verify the disability and to establish eligibility for accommodations. They should then schedule an appointment with the professor to make appropriate arrangements. (See University Policy No. 2.4; an attachment describes the DASS procedures and relocated office.)

**Religious Observance:** Religiously observant students wishing to be absent on holidays that require missing class should notify their professors in writing at the beginning of the semester, and should discuss with them, in advance, acceptable ways of making up any work missed because of the absence. (See University Policy No. 1.9.)

**Excused Absences for University Extracurricular Activities:** Students participating in an officially sanctioned, scheduled University extracurricular activity should be given the opportunity to make up class assignments or other graded assignments missed as a result of their participation. It is the responsibility of the student to make arrangements with the instructor prior to any missed scheduled examination or other missed assignment for making up the work. (University Undergraduate Catalogue)