

ARTH 405
SPECIAL TOPIC:
HISTORY OF PHOTOGRAPHY



ART HISTORY
SCHOOL OF ART HISTORY, CLASSICS AND RELIGIOUS STUDIES
Victoria University of Wellington

TRIMESTER 1 & 2 2011
28 February to 14 October 2011

Cover image: Len Lye, Anne Lye, 1947 photogram

ARTH 405

SPECIAL TOPIC: HISTORY OF PHOTOGRAPHY

Course coordinator	Geoffrey Batchen, Level 3, Old Kirk 312 Tel. 463 9688, e-mail : geoffrey.batchen@vuw.ac.nz
Time	Thursdays 9.00am-10.50am
Place	Old Kirk 301
Teaching dates	28 February to 14 October 2011
Mid-trimester break	1/3 18 April to 1 May 2011 2/3 22 August to 4 September 2011
Assessment period	21 October to 12 November
Study week	17-21 October 2011
Withdrawal dates	For information on withdrawals and refunds see http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/admisenrol/ payments/withdrawalsrefunds.aspx
Art History administrator	Pippa Wisheart, level 3 (ground floor) OK306 Tel. 463 5800, e-mail pippa.wisheart@vuw.ac.nz
Additional information	See the Art History notice board in Old Kirk adjacent to Pippa Wisheart's office (OK 306) and see Blackboard http://blackboard.vuw.ac.nz . For general information about Art History see http://www.victoria.ac.nz/art-history/

INTRODUCTION

This course will offer an Honours-level analysis of issues relating to the study of the history of photography.

In 2011 ARTH 405 is a specialist class devoted to the preparation of an exhibition for the Adam Art Gallery. The exhibition, due to open on November 19, 2011, will be focused on a series of cameraless photographs made by New Zealand-born artist Len Lye in New York in 1947. These photographs are now held by the Govett-Brewster Gallery in New Plymouth. This class will therefore spend some time investigating the history of cameraless photographs, the work of Len Lye, and the creative possibilities of curatorial practice. We will also be visiting museums and galleries and making our own cameraless photographs. Each participant will write a brief catalogue essay based on their own research to go in a publication that will accompany the exhibition.

Aims

- * to introduce you to a nuanced history of cameraless photography, from its beginnings until now.
- * to enhance your skills in oral presentation, curatorial practice and critical writing.
- * to give you some real-life curatorial experience and the opportunity to publish your research.

Course delivery

ARTH 405 is taught in twenty 2-hour seminars over the first and second trimesters. In the second half of the course, as we prepare the exhibition, there will be regular consultation sessions where I will be available to give you feedback on your research and writing.

In line with Art History's learning objectives, the course will:

- encourage you to apply your skills of analysis to critically examine visual and textual material
- develop your capacity for independent work, including the formulation, analysis and refinement of topics
- ensure the consistent application of the conventions of academic writing and art historical research
- ensure the full use of library resources
- refine your skills in seminar presentation and oral debate
- prepare you for post-graduate research in art history and curatorial practice
- introduce you to the standards required of scholarly articles and papers and the application of your research and writing skills

SEMINAR PROGRAMME

1. Introduction (March 3)

The aims of the class; curating an exhibition, differentiating the photogram, writing a catalogue essay.

2. Curating (March 10)

A consideration of the history and creative possibilities of curating an exhibition.

4. Origins (March 17)

The history of cameraless photography in the nineteenth century.

3. Visit to The Adam Art Gallery (March 24)

An introduction to the Adam Art Gallery and its exhibition procedures.

<http://www.adamartgallery.org.nz/about/vision-and-mission-statement/>

<http://www.adamartgallery.org.nz/about/history/>

5. Avant-Garde (March 31)

The adoption of the cameraless photograph by members of the avant-garde in the 1920s and '30s.

6. Post-War (April 7)

The cameraless photograph between 1940 and 1970

7. Visit to Te Papa (April 14)

Looking at photographs in the print room at Te Papa.

Mid-trimester Break

8. Len Lye (May 5)

The work and career of Len Lye, with particular focus on the making of his cameraless photographs.

9. Making Photograms (May 12)

A visit to the darkrooms at Massey to make some cameraless photographs under the supervision of Deidra Sullivan.

10. Visit to Govett-Brewster Gallery (Saturday May 21)

A visit to the Govett-Brewster Gallery to see the Lye photographs in the flesh.

<http://www.govettbrewster.com/LenLye/>

11. Diversions (May 26)

Putting Lye's cameraless portrait photographs in historical context.

12. The Present (June 2)

Looking at cameraless photography today: why is it popular in the art world again?

13. Writing (June 9)

How can you tell a good catalogue essay and wall text from a bad one?
Choosing a title for our exhibition.

14. Research and Consultation (July 14)

Students will consult with the instructor about their research and catalogue essay.

14. Oral Presentation (July 21)

Each student will give an illustrated 10-minute talk about their chosen object in the exhibition.

15. Oral Presentation (July 28)

Each student will give an illustrated 10-minute talk about their chosen object in the exhibition.

17. Catalogue essay writing (August 4)

Students will hand in a draft of their catalogue essay for feedback and discussion.

18. Catalogue essay editing/photographs ordered (August 11)

Discussion of catalogue design and final drafts of catalogue essays submitted.

19. Wall labels and exhibition design finalized (August 18)

Discussion of wall labels and exhibition design.

20. Conclusion (August 25)

Meet to discuss any last minute issues or problems.

Exhibition installation (week beginning November 14)

*** EXHIBITION OPENS * November 19, 2011**

ASSESSMENT

ARTH 405 is assessed by means of one research essay (40%), one oral presentation (20%), a short catalogue essay (20%) and participation in class discussions (20%).

Research Essay (40%):	due June 24
Oral Presentation (20%)	due July 21 or 28
Catalogue essay (20%)	due August 11
Participation (20%)	throughout course

The assessment is designed to encourage you to develop and demonstrate your skills in research, analysis, speaking and writing.

- * the first assignment is a broad historical research essay intended to prepare you to write a shorter catalogue essay on a particular object.
- * the second assignment is a ten-minute oral presentation intended to prepare you to give a gallery talk on your chosen object from the exhibition.
- * the third assignment is a 1000-word catalogue essay on a particular object in the exhibition.
- * you will also be assessed on the basis of your regular participation in class discussions.

Mandatory course requirements

- All coursework must be handed in by the due dates. **No assignments will be accepted after 14 October 2011.** Extensions for assignments will not be granted, except on the receipt of a medical certificate. Without medical reasons and a supporting certificate, two percentage points will be deducted for each day beyond the due date.
- You must attend and participate actively in seminar discussions.
- You must play a full part in the organisation and presentation of the exhibition which includes giving a public floor-talk in the gallery on your section of the show.

Marking and workload

Coursework will be reviewed by an outside assessor in order to ensure that academic standards at Honours level are met. You may request a second opinion in the final assessment of any piece of written work. The University recommends that approximately 300 hours per course, inclusive of seminars, be given to a full-year, 4-course graduate programme in order to maintain satisfactory progress.

Aegrotat provisions please refer to the University website for further information: <http://www.victoria.ac.nz/timetables/aegrotat.aspx>

Academic Integrity and Plagiarism

Academic integrity means that university staff and students, in their teaching and learning are expected to treat others honestly, fairly and with respect at all times. It is not acceptable to mistreat academic, intellectual or creative work that has been done by other people by representing it as your own original work.

Academic integrity is important because it is the core value on which the University's learning, teaching and research activities are based. Victoria University's reputation for academic integrity adds value to your qualification.

The University defines plagiarism as presenting someone else's work as if it were your own, whether you mean to or not. 'Someone else's work' means anything that is not your own idea. Even if it is presented in your own style, you must acknowledge your sources fully and appropriately. This includes:

- Material from books, journals or any other printed source
- The work of other students or staff
- Information from the internet
- Software programs and other electronic material
- Designs and ideas
- The organisation or structuring of any such material

Find out more about plagiarism, how to avoid it and penalties, on the University's website: <http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study/plagiarism.aspx>

ASSESSMENT

1. Research Essay (40% due June 24)

Your first assignment is an essay of 4000 words maximum. It should be typed, double-spaced, and should of course employ correct grammar and spelling. You need to include both a bibliography and correctly laid out endnotes, as well as good quality illustrations. Please feel free to come and see me with any questions or problems.

2. Oral Presentation (20% July 21 or 28)

Each student will give a ten-minute illustrated presentation on a particular item in the exhibition. Presentations will be assessed on the basis of coherence, research, and the quality of oral and visual communication.

3. Catalogue Essay (20% due August 11)

Each student will submit a succinct and yet informative 1000-word essay on a particular item in the exhibition for publication in its accompanying catalogue. The word limit must be strictly adhered to. Essays will be assessed on the basis of the quality of the research and writing.

4. Participation in class (20% throughout seminars)

Discussions held during seminars are an important component of this class, offering a way of learning how to analyse and debate texts and images. Each student's participation will be assessed on the basis of the quality of its contribution to class discussions and the development of the exhibition.

5. Floor talks

Each student will also be encouraged to give a ten-minute talk in the Adam Art Gallery during the course of the exhibition (November 19-December 18, 2011). Dates for these talks will be decided during the year.

WHERE TO FIND MORE DETAILED INFORMATION

Find key dates, explanations of grades and other useful information at www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study. Find out how academic progress is monitored and how enrolment can be restricted at www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study/academic-progress. Most statutes and policies are available at www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about/policy, except qualification statutes, which are available via the *Calendar* webpage at www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study/calendar.aspx (See Section C).

Other useful information for students may be found at the website of the Assistant Vice-Chancellor (Academic), at www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about_victoria/avcademic.

Class Representative

A class representative will be elected in the first class, and that person's name and contact details will be available to VUWSA, the Course Coordinator and the class. The class representative provides a communication channel to liaise with the Course Coordinator on behalf of students.

WIN \$500

THE CHARTWELL TRUST

STUDENT ART WRITING PRIZE 2011

The Adam Art Gallery invites students to participate in the Chartwell Trust Student Art Writing Prize, an annual writing initiative focusing on visual art and culture.

ELIGIBILITY

The prize is open to **all** Victoria University of Wellington students studying Art History, Classics, Religious Studies, Museum and Heritage Studies, English, Film, Theatre, and Media Studies.

PRIZE

The winning entry will receive the cash prize of **\$500** and have their essay published on the Adam Art Gallery website www.adamartgallery.org.nz.

GUIDELINES/CRITERIA

- Entries should be in the form of a review or essay addressing an exhibition at the Adam Art Gallery or a work from the Victoria University of Wellington Art Collection
- Check www.adamartgallery.org.nz/learning-opportunities/chartwell-trust-student-writing-prize for previous winning entries
- Submissions should be no more than 1,500 words
- Texts should be clearly labelled with author's name, contact details, course of study and student ID
- Texts must be submitted in both hard copy form and in Microsoft Word format (A4, single sided and 1.5 spaced).

DEADLINE

Entries are **now open** and can be submitted anytime until the closing date. The closing date for submissions is **30 September 2011**.

Entries should be sent to:

The Chartwell Trust Student Art Writing Prize

c/- Adam Art Gallery

Victoria University of Wellington

PO Box 600

Wellington 6140

or via email adamartgallery@vuw.ac.nz

GOOD LUCK!