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### **Spatial Studies/Sculpture 12, Spring 2009**

**INTRO: SCULPTURE IN CONTEXT:** This course is designed for students who wish to begin or advance their knowledge and practice of art in three dimensional space - **Sculpture's 'expanded field'**. You will learn different techniques in the production of 3D form while increasing your understanding of the way a work may be perceived by an audience [not limited to the museum or gallery audience]. 'Meaning' or 'content' will be derived not simply from *resemblance* to life narratives or from material *appearance* [formal characteristics: shape; form; color; density; mass; etc.], but from the larger total *context*; how the artwork relates to and through: history; culture; theory; criticism; contemporary life & ideas; physical & formal presence; site; surroundings; the human body; etc.

3D-works can populate many different *spaces*; we may examine formal and abstract spatial relationships, negative & positive space, anthropometrics & psycho-physical space, functional form, public space, etc., as well as work that lends itself to references and associations with life-experience and communally-shared ideas and memory. The artwork is seen here not as a discrete object that relates only to other art and to the gallery, but to a rich visual culture [some would say a language of signs], a *context*, and to a concern with *the human condition*. From this standpoint, you will need to gauge how much information, both literal or more abstract, you wish to provide for your audience to interact with.

**RESEARCH:** Dada, Surrealism & Fluxus are historical groups [beginning early to mid last century, and some would say ongoing] that concentrated on expanding traditional notions of art, often by simultaneously referencing the *absurd* and the *everyday*. In the 1960's and 70's [in the USA at least] Pop Art & Minimalism reacted against the moribund Gallery/Museum/Academy dominance of Abstract Expressionist painting typified by the work of artists like Jackson Pollock and Willem de Kooning, and championed by critic Clement Greenberg. By embracing a reductive tendency toward 'making art' they constricted 'gesture' and problematized 'transcendence' in the art object. During that period the West saw cultural change that are reflected in its art forms: the Happening; Environmental Art; Conceptual Art; etc. In the 1980's, Postmodernism and an art practice influenced by its theories of *authorship/spectatorship* flourished. Since the 90's many artists have embraced collaborative, interactive, interdisciplinary, and technologically

influenced works.

These are very general trends that should not restrict your work or research, just inform it.

**PROJECTS:** You will be assigned several projects during the quarter: one of them is a group project. They are designed to give you a starting point, but not constrict your own interpretation within the guidelines. At the end of each project, we will have a group critique in which you will be expected to comment on each other's work. In addition, you are asked to keep a log of your library research time.

**MATERIALS:** Some basic supplies will be provided by the department. A small portion of your lab fee also contributes to general tools and equipment. Always have drawing and note-taking supplies on hand in the lockers provided, Each project will have more specific requirements for materials.

**CLOTHING:** You are required to wear closed shoes at all times in the sculpture areas and shops. You also need to bring or wear long sleeves and long trousers for metal and woodwork. Dust masks are required for all work with particles – woodshop and plasterwork. No resin usage is allowed in our area.

**ASSESSMENT:** 25% attendance, preparedness to work, research, and participation in class discussion and critique, the rest evenly divided between assignments.

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DUE DATES:

THURSDAY:

materials to bring, no exceptions; exacto knife and blades, steel ruler, lock for locker, pencils, paper, notebook

GOOGLE IMAGE SEARCH: CARDBOARD CHAIR:

<http://images.google.com/images?client=safari&rls=en&q=cardboard%20chair&oe=UTF-8&um=1&ie=UTF-8&sa=N&hl=en&tab=wi>

READING DUE THURSDAY:

Bruce Mau's *Design Manifesto*: <http://www.brucemaudesign.com/manifesto.html>

TUESDAY NEXT WEEK:

free sketch-up program downloaded onto your computer, take tutorials, drawing made and printed.

READING DUE TUESDAY:

Malcolm Gladwell's *The Physical Genius*:

[http://www.gladwell.com/1999/1999\\_08\\_02\\_a\\_genius.htm](http://www.gladwell.com/1999/1999_08_02_a_genius.htm)

MY WEBSITE FOR CLASS INFO: [www.arts.ucsb.edu/faculty/mulfinger/](http://www.arts.ucsb.edu/faculty/mulfinger/)