

Art S138 Introduction to Digital Photography

Lisa Kereszi

YSS 2024 Session A

May 27 – June 28

MW 9.00-11.15

<https://yale.zoom.us/j/9961595481>

The focus of this class is the digital making of still color photographs with particular emphasis on the potential meaning of images in a photo-saturated world. Through picture-making, students develop a personal visual syntax using color and composition for effect, meaning, psychology and narrative possibility. Students produce original work using a required digital camera. Introduction to a range of tools including color correction and fine-tuning. Assignments include prompts, regular critiques with active participation and a final project. Lectures examine the progression of photography as fine art medium and the tradition of handheld, natural-light photography through the 20th century and into contemporary practices in the 21st, focusing on a diversity of voices. Images are discussed and critiqued projected onscreen, and the focus is on the image as an end to itself. Photographs are discussed as stand-alone visual statements, as well as in context, and concentration is on the conception of and making of a picture rather than on the print as object, as students will not learn inkjet printing or have class or after-hours lab access in this course. Students must have access to a digital camera (DSLR, point-and-shoot or smartphone).

Readings and online videos and specific shooting assignments will be assigned over the course of the session.

Attendance is mandatory, and no absences are allowed.

Grades are based on: 50% work shown in final critique, 25% work shown in prior critiques, & 25% participation

Week 1:

M: Introductions: Intro to the course and lecture on optics and the beginnings of photography & your individual intros to the group – students should screenshare one representative image to show and discuss with the class

W: Lecture: How a camera works, building on the photo history lecture and digging in to the ways a camera as tool controls the way a picture looks, such as with depth-of-field and motion blur

Assignment: Readings, read your camera manual, make 100+ exposures/images making use of techniques discussed in class, and edit down to 10 best

Week 2:

M: Share your 10 best images with the class for intensive feedback/discussion/conversation

W: Lecture on the high points of 20th century analog photography, the move from B&W into color as fine art, including Robert Frank, Diane Arbus, Nan Goldin, Roy DeCarava and many more

Assignment: Readings, videos, make 100+ exposures/images about the place you are currently living, and edit down to 10 best

Week 3

M: Share your 10 best images with the class for intensive feedback/discussion/conversation

W: Lecture/demo on Photoshop editing techniques

Assignment: Readings, videos, visit a local art/photography exhibition, make 100+ exposures/images that only *you* could make, and edit down to 10 best

Week 4:

M: Share your 10 best images with the class for intensive feedback/discussion/conversation

W: Lecture on contemporary photography and current exhibitions, the move from analog into digital practices, including a Yale MFA photography survey and discussion on public art and the work of Zoe Strauss and more

Assignment: Make 50+ exposures/images to round out your body of work, put what you learned about Photoshop editing into practice to color-correct and make the best version of your 15 strongest images, and make one small, quick print at home, Staples, Tyco, etc and install it out in the world somewhere to leave your mark on the place you are inhabiting now

Week 5:

M: Final Critique – longer critique and discussion with 15 best images from the semester

W: Final Critique – longer critique and discussion with 15 best images from the semester, wrap-up and conclusion

I am looking forward to working with you in this intensive and fun art course!