

School of Visual Arts
MFA Fine Arts
The Rule of the Outlaw
Fall 2016, 3pm to 6pm
Sergio Muñoz Sarmiento

*“When you think you have the answer, think again.
And when you think you have that answer, think yet again.”*
- Sergio Muñoz Sarmiento

Being an outlaw means knowing the law. Or better yet, thinking like those that know the law. As Saul Goodman proclaimed to Walter White a few years back, "you don't need a criminal lawyer. You need a criminal lawyer."

In dialogue with the instructor, students of this course are asked to investigate and assess cultural modes of expression that are not based on perpetuating traditional definitions of "art" and the antiquated and repressive artist-gallery-museum systems.

Let's face it: some problems cannot be solved. So why attempt to solve the unsolvable? Because by attempting to problem-solve through structures typically left unexamined by artists--such as law, black-market economies, and entrepreneurship--we are simultaneously encouraged to revisit the lost arts of creativity, originality, risk, and self-sufficiency. Through discussions, site-visits, guest speakers, screenings, music and occasional (brief) readings, students of this course will explore how to use nomadic mindsets and modes of thinking in order to embrace problem-solving that encourages risk and failure.

Note: This course emphasizes discussion, critical thinking, risk of thought and actions, and encourages the student to pose difficult questions. That being said, this course deals with difficult and challenging subject matter. Thus, I do not provide “safe spaces” or “trigger warnings” particularly given the subject matter of this course but also because you are adults and aspiring artists that should make it a part of your daily life and existence to deal with challenges and ideas that are not to your liking. If this approach to my teaching is not to your liking, I suggest you take another course.

I also reserve the right to add, change, edit, and/or delete anything on this syllabus at any time, with or without notice.

Who am I?

September: “To me, ultimately, ‘martial arts’ means: honestly expressing yourself.” – Bruce Lee

7: Class: Video: Andy Kaufman on Letterman (Oct. 5, 1980).
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6p0sr2BejUk> . If you haven’t viewed any episodes of Breaking Bad, watch at least one season by next class.

14: Class: Discuss: “The World According to Team Walt,” by Ross Douthat, available here: http://www.nytimes.com/2013/09/29/opinion/sunday/douthat-the-world-according-to-team-walt.html?_r=0 . and “The Rules of Magic,” by Emily Croy Barker, <http://www.nytimes.com/2013/07/28/opinion/sunday/the-rules-of-magic.html> . Hand out project.

21: Class: Discuss projects.

28: Class: Discuss Mamet essay. “Why I am no longer a brain-dead liberal,” by David Mamet, available here: <http://www.villagevoice.com/news/david-mamet-why-i-am-no-longer-a-brain-dead-liberal-6429407> and “The Nine” pdf handout (will be emailed to you by SMS).

October: “Just like Cream, but worse.” – Lester Bangs, on Black Sabbath

5: Guest: Alfred Steiner, artist and lawyer

12: Class: View Film: No Country for Old Men.

19: Class: Discuss: Americana through a ViewMaster.

26: Class:

November: “Should the living be governed by the dead?” –Sergio Munoz Sarmiento

2: Class:

9: Class:

16: Class:

23: Class:

30: Class:

December: “Read the structure. Read the structure.” – SMS

7: Guest: Lane Relyea, Art Critic

14: Class:

- I. Required Readings and Viewings: The following readings and viewings should be read or viewed by end-of-semester unless assigned before or instructed otherwise.
- a. Book: "Seeing is forgetting the name of the thing one sees" by Lawrence Weschler
 - b. Book: "Guerilla Warfare," by Ernesto "Che" Guevara. Available here: http://www.thefrontiersmen.org/pdf/Misc%20Handbooks/Che_Guevara_Guerrilla_Warfare.pdf
 - c. Book: "American Psycho," by Bret Easton Ellis
 - d. TV Show: Sons of Anarchy (all)
 - e. TV Show: Breaking Bad (all)
 - f. TV Show: Walking Dead (first 4 seasons)
 - g. TV Show: The Twilight Zone ('50s and '60s. Do not watch the new stuff)
 - h. Film: Thelma & Louise
 - i. Film: One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest
 - j. Film: Dirty Harry
 - k. Film: No Country for Old Men
 - l. Film: The House of Games
 - m. Film: A Clockwork Orange
 - n. Film: Falling Down
 - o. Film: Salo, or the 120 Days of Sodom
 - p. Article: Pro-Putin Biker Gang Revs Up Russia, by Thomas Grove, available at: <http://www.wsj.com/articles/pro-putin-biker-gang-revs-up-russia-1462818273>
 - q. Article: How the Twilight Zone Predicted Our Paranoid Present, by Adrienne LaFrance. Available at: <http://www.theatlantic.com/entertainment/archive/2013/12/how-em-the-twilight-zone-em-predicted-our-paranoid-present/282700/>
 - r. Video: Heavy Metal Parking Lot. Available here: <http://www.heavymetalparkinglot.com/hmpl-home.html#watch>
 - s. Video: Bruce Lee, The Lost Interview, Part I. Available here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tEBgiHEtoo8>
 - t. Video: Bruce Lee, The Lost Interview, Part II. Available here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ozck0Jy175Q>
 - u. Video: Ozzy Osbourne Interview 1997. Available here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bA51JRWtlm8>
 - v.

