

MC416A - Media Theory: The Interactee
Sara Roberts



William Blake *Urizen*, 1794

Class description:

Exploring the nature, perceptual abilities, reflexes, and propensities of the "interactee" can lead to more effective work. This is a study of audience perception, in particular perception of music, media, and artwork. Starting with consciousness, and moving through gradually broader contexts: cognition, emotional perception, finally to the cultural "reading" of works. Class work will require reading. Lecture and in-class exercises are on topics complimentary to reading: presence, memory, anthropomorphism, and critique. Discussion groups, meeting every third class, will focus on synthesizing the reading and lecture topics.

Schedule:

Meeting 1 (Sept 13) Introduction

FIRST SECTION: CONSCIOUSNESS AND PRESENCE

Meeting 2 (Sept 20)

Reading : Nørretranders Ch 6

Thompson, Consciousness and Empathy

Lecture Topic: Presence

Meeting 3 (Sept 27)

Discussion Groups

Meeting 4 (Oct 4)

First Paper due - reading and discussion of papers

Meeting 5 (Oct 11) - Holiday

SECOND SECTION: MEMORY

Meeting 6 (Oct 18)

First paper handed back

Reading: Snyder, ch.1 Auditory Memory, ch.8 Schemas

Optional: ch.12 Rhythm, ch.13 Form

Lecture/Exercise: Memory Theatre

Meeting 7 (Oct 25)

Discussion Groups

Meeting 8 (Nov 1)

Second Paper due

Reading and discussion of papers

THIRD SECTION: THE QUALITY WITHOUT A NAME

Meeting 9 (Nov 8)

Second paper handed back

Reading: Alexander, from The Timeless Way of Building, ch.2
and from The Luminous Ground, The Ten Thousand Beings

Lecture Topic: Anthropomorphism and Empathy

Meeting 10 (Nov 15)
Discussion Groups

Meeting 11 (Nov 22)
Third Paper due
Reading and discussion of papers

FOURTH SECTION: WAYS OF "READING"

Meeting 12 (Nov 29)
Third paper handed back
Reading: John Berger Ways of Seeing sections 1-5
Lecture topic: What goes on in critique?

Meeting 13 (Dec 6)
Discussion Groups

Meeting 14 (Dec 13)
Fourth paper due
Reading and discussion of papers, and class in general

On reserve in the CalArts Library :

The User Illusion - Tor Nørretranders

Other texts on consciousness -

Consciousness, an Introduction - Susan Blackmore

*The Origin of Consciousness in the Breakdown of the
Bicameral Mind* - J Jaynes

Empathy and Consciousness (paper) - Evan Thompson,

(Also available online www.imprint.co.uk/pdf/Thompson.pdf)

Music and Memory - Bob Snyder

(mid- October) A CD of music examples for Snyder

The Art of Memory - Francis Yates

A Pattern Language - Christopher Alexander

The Timeless Way of Building - Christopher Alexander

The Luminous Ground - Christopher Alexander

Ways of Seeing - John Berger (both video and book)

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