

**Syllabus**  
**UNCA ARTS AND IDEAS- 310-002**  
**Community Arts Project**  
**Fall 2008**  
**3:10- 4:25- CH 102**

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**Course Objectives:**

Students will learn the history, principles, and practices of community based art. Students will have practical experience in gathering oral histories from community members and turning those stories into a public performance or other art piece. Students will get to know local history and local community members through these activities.

**Course Description:**

This is a participatory class where students will research local history, interview members of the local community, present performance and/or art pieces based on interviews and create a final group art project based on their in-class work. In addition, students will familiarize themselves with the practices of a variety of community-based artists through reading articles, viewing work on-line, attending lecture/demonstrations by guest artists, and viewing videotaped performances. Finally, students will participate in a variety of in-class exercises that model techniques used by community-based artists.

**Class Components:**

**Community Arts Overview** - Students will read articles, view on-line galleries, listen to audio interviews, watch videos, and discuss the concepts, content, and practices of a variety of community arts projects.

**Interviewing** - Students will learn, through participation and research, how to conduct story circles and oral history interviews as a way to build bridges within the community and gather material for art projects. In lieu of a final exam students will conduct and transcribe at least one oral history interview with a community member.

**Art Projects** - Each student will be responsible for creating a short solo art project and contributing to the final class presentation that is based on responses to interviews, story circles, research, and class exercises. These projects will be graded and will require preparation outside of class time.

**Class Requirements:**

\* **Daily attendance and participation in class discussions and exercises**- All students are expected to have read and be able to thoughtfully comment on the assigned reading/viewing material. Students will also participate in a variety of in-class exercises that model creative approaches to shaping source material. You will not be graded on how well you do the in-class exercises, it is simply important that you participate wholeheartedly. Excessive absences will adversely affect your participation grade.

Arriving in class more than 15 minutes late (or leaving class early) is the equivalent of half an absence. If you are late please check with me after class to make sure that you receive credit for attendance.

Students may be asked to generate discussion questions and lead the discussions for the weekly assignments.

**\* Attendance at arts events as scheduled**

**\* Interview**-All students will conduct at least one oral history interview held off campus with a Western North Carolina community member. Before they conduct the interview students are expected to conduct independent research to help them prepare. What information can you find to help you better understand the type of community you are about to enter? What are the issues that this interview will explore? Finally, students will transcribe the oral history interview, turning in a copy of the transcription to the instructor and the community partner organization. (Additional instructions and information about this assignment will be given in the form of a handout.)

**\*Solo art project** -This will be some kind of art response to your interview. It can be a piece of visual art, a song, a poem, an audio story, a film, a cartoon, a monologue or performance piece. How are you interpreting the story or information that is in your interview? Along with your presentation you should submit an artist statement, which describes what you hope to communicate through your art piece and also your process. Be prepared to engage with the class in a thoughtful discussion about your work. It is strongly recommended that you discuss ideas about your solo project with the instructor prior to your presentation.

**\*Participate in a final, class-wide community based art project** - All students will participate in the preparation and presentation of a final class presentation, which will be created collaboratively from the material generated by the class and open to the public. The final presentation may be compiled from the solo projects as well as group assignments that arise from in-class exercises.

**\*Response Papers**- Four times throughout the semester, students will write a response paper to the material that we have covered in class. It can be your response to the reading or viewing assignments, to the in-class exercises, the interview process, the issues with the community group, or the work of your classmates. It is not merely a summation of what we have read or discussed but your analysis and reaction to it. 2 typed pages. One of your “response papers” can be art response- a poem, a story, a drawing, a song, or a decorative journal entry responding to the material studied or seen.

**Outside Art Events/ Art Responses**- You will attend 2 ticketed art events outside of class time. Both Art Spiegelman and Faith Ringgold use unique forms to tell both autobiographical and community stories. These events are in the evening and listed on your syllabus. The cost for each event is \$6. Tickets must be purchased in advance. More information is listed below

**Art Spiegelman**

**Sep 11 • 7 PM -Thomas Wolfe Auditorium UNCA-only tickets at Highsmith Box Office \$6 UNCA students**

**\$15 UNCA faculty/staff/alumni/NCCCR**

Pulitzer Prize-winning illustrator Art Spiegelman is the creator of “Maus,” a gripping graphic novel about the Holocaust, and “In the Shadow of No Towers,” a personal work about his experiences during the 9/11 terrorist attacks. He will discuss the history of Independent comics and his experiences after more than 40 years in his field.

**Faith Ringgold**

**Nov 18 • 7 PM**

**SPECIAL UNCA-only tickets at Highsmith -Diana Wortham Theatre**

**\$6 UNCA students \$15 UNCA faculty/staff/alumni/NCCCR**

Multi-faceted Faith Ringgold talks about her work as a painter, textile artist, children’s book author and illustrator who explores African- American experience in her work.

**Tickets**

Though many events listed are free, events that require tickets do offer campus discount rates to UNC Asheville students, faculty, staff, NCCCR members, WCU students at UNC Asheville and alumni. Campus discount ticket prices vary with events and may be purchased in person at the Highsmith University Union Box Office with your OneCard (CatCard for WCU). Campus discount tickets are limited and may not be available at the door on the evenings of events so advance purchase is highly recommended.

Cultural & Special Events has ONLINE TICKETING now available at <http://www.uncatickets.com>

For more information -Highsmith Box Office 828.232.5000

Located on the street level, immediately inside the main entrance

Hours are M-F, 9am-9pm, Sa/Su 2-6pm when classes are in session

**GRADING:**

Attendance and Participation	20%
Interview	25%
Project proposal based on class interview	5%
4 response Papers	20%
Quilt Square	5%
Solo Art response	20%
Participation in Final Project	5%

**TEXT:** One required text: **You should have been here yesterday- A Guide to Cultural Documentation in Maryland** - Elaine Eff

Additional assignments will be in the form of handouts or on the web as indicated on the syllabus.

**Schedule:** *[Please note that the schedule is subject to change]*

**AUGUST 19 - Class overview- Discussion of syllabus & community partners**

In Class Exercises: Building Community among ourselves

**21-** Discussion: What is Community? What is Art? What is Community Art?

Video viewing: PACT: Dialogues on Art, Culture, and Social Change

**The Family Diversity Project: Portraits of People with Disabilities**

<http://www.familydiversity.org/roadtofreedom.php>

**26- From Interview to Art**

Reading/Viewing Assignment: An Introduction To Community Art and Activism

[http://www.communityarts.net/readingroom/archivefiles/2002/02/an\\_introduction.php](http://www.communityarts.net/readingroom/archivefiles/2002/02/an_introduction.php)

In Class- Examples of Community Arts Projects from previous classes

**28-** Reading/Viewing assignment: Reading/ Viewing Assignment:

Indivisible: Stories of American Community

<http://www.indivisible.org/faq.htm>

<http://www.indivisible.org/gallery.htm> - Go to #11- WNC- Marshal, NC Handmade in America- Small-town Revitalization Project and check out #4- San Juan Texas- Be sure to listen to the audio clips in #4

Whose Agenda Is It, Anyway? Documentary Burdens, Community Benefits

[http://www.communityarts.net/readingroom/archivefiles/2003/08/whose\\_agenda\\_is.php](http://www.communityarts.net/readingroom/archivefiles/2003/08/whose_agenda_is.php)

**September 2- Intro to Disability Studies**

**On-line reading: Whose Body Image is it anyway?**

[http://jaehnclare.net/index/Publications/Body\\_Image](http://jaehnclare.net/index/Publications/Body_Image)

Additional reading assignments as handout materials

**4- Planning the Community Arts Project- Discuss reading**

Reading: Eff – “Walk before You Fly” pp 1-33

Eye of the Storm: Reflections on Violence

Read the article, look at the slideshow of posters & listen to the audio clips -

[http://www.communityarts.net/readingroom/archivefiles/2007/05/eye\\_of\\_the\\_stor.php#](http://www.communityarts.net/readingroom/archivefiles/2007/05/eye_of_the_stor.php#)

**9- Guest Speaker- Deborah Miles- Center for Diversity Education**

**Viewing of the Love Makes A Family exhibit**

**11- Class –TBA Art Spiegelman- 7pm - Thomas Wolfe Auditorium**

**16 – In Class- Exercise: Story Circles- Telling Our Personal Stories**

Bring in an object that has meaning for you

In class drawing or writing response

**1<sup>st</sup> reflection paper due****18 - Oral History Interview training – 1**

Reading: Eff (pp35-55)  
Decide topic for in class interview

**23 Oral History Interview training- 2 –**

Conduct in class interview

**25: Brainstorm interview questions with community partner**

(Look at sample questions in Eff: pp 67 & 70)

**30- Present Art Project Ideas based on Class interviews****October 2- Other Ways of Telling Stories: The Narrative of Visual Art**

Reading/Viewing Assignment: RepoHistory- Read overview of organization and then look at past projects. Look at both The Lower Manhattan Sign Project and Voices of Renewal. Read the intro to each of these projects, look at the art work pages for each, You need to go to the documentation page for each project to get a closer look at each picture. Follow the link to Lucy Lippard's article: Anti-Amnesia

<http://www.repohistory.org/who.html>

In Class Viewing: The Dinner Party/ The Birth Project (as time allows)

**7 –Telling Stories to Save Lives:**

**In class Viewing: Common Threads: Stories from the Aids quilt  
(1<sup>st</sup> half)**

**9– Finish Viewing Common Threads**

**In Class Viewing: Hurana Aids play  
2<sup>nd</sup> reflection paper due**

**FALL BREAK**

**16 - On–line reading:** Deeper than Skin or Gender: Community Arts and Cultural Diversity

[http://www.communityarts.net/readingroom/archivefiles/2002/07/deeper\\_than\\_ski.php](http://www.communityarts.net/readingroom/archivefiles/2002/07/deeper_than_ski.php)In

**Post Interview Process - Reading:** Eff: pp 57-71

**21 – Quilt Square due****A Look at Puppets, Protest, and Parades**

In Class Viewing: Images of Bread and Puppet Theater and a video of Puppetista Activists in Action

Reading/Viewing Assignment:

Puppet Uprising: Peter Schumann's Bread and Puppet Theater (article)

[http://www.cbc.ca/ideas/features/bread\\_puppet/index.html](http://www.cbc.ca/ideas/features/bread_puppet/index.html)

Bread and Puppet- photo gallery (museum)

<http://www.breadandpuppet.org/museumphotos.html>

Slides from a Bread and Puppet Theater Performance in Bellows Falls, VT

<http://www.fixcite.com/bp/perf.html>

**23 Theater of the Oppressed-** Reading assignment: A Brief Introduction to Augusto Boal

[http://www.communityarts.net/readingroom/archivefiles/1999/12/a\\_brief\\_introdu](http://www.communityarts.net/readingroom/archivefiles/1999/12/a_brief_introdu).

Php

In class performance exercises around disability issues

**28 TBA – Stories to monologues- Twilight Los Angeles/ The Exonerated**

**30 TBA**

**3<sup>rd</sup> reflection paper due**

**NOVEMBER 4 - TBA**

**6- Poetry staging – bring a short poem to class**

**11- TBA**

**13- Present Solo Project**

**18– Present Solo Project**

**Attend Faith Ringgold event 7pm - Diana Wortham Theatre-**

**20- Born Into Brothels (film)**

**25- Finish film – Plan Group Presentation**

**DECEMBER 2- PLAN GROUP PRESENTATION**

**4- GROUP PRESENTATION**

**FINAL EXAM- December 11<sup>th</sup>- 3:00- 5:30 pm**

**Transcribed interviews due. In-class self evaluation**

**4th response papers due**