

SOPIS 2007 | PARSONS SCHOOL OF DESIGN
SECTION C
June 19-Aug. 9

[summer 2007]

Course title: Language and Culture of Design
CRN: 1736 / PNSO 0500 A3
Course meeting time: Tuesday and Thursday, 4-6:50pm
Classroom: 2 W13th, rm. 1101
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Course Description

Working in a friendly interdisciplinary studio environment, students will focus on working individually and in teams to identify and solve design problems. Throughout the course, students will investigate New York's Lower East Side (LES), using a variety of design methods and resources to develop a final site-specific project, culminating in a presentation and design critique.

Field trips to museums and visits by artists and designers will enrich and enhance the students' familiarity with the language and culture of design. Many of the resources will focus on conceptual public art, site-specific installations and interdisciplinary design. Students will be expected to consider these concepts throughout the course and apply them to the final project. Students will keep a sketchbook to document their ideas, experiences, and design iterations during the course.

Course Goals

Throughout the course students will:

- Learn to identify and solve design problems through various forms of research and design methods
 - Experience and become comfortable with different formats of presentation and critique
 - Experience and become skilled in collaborative teamwork
 - Become comfortable in the Parsons environment and acquainted with school resources
 - Become familiar with New York City resources
- Upon completion of the course, students will be confident and prepared to enter the Parsons program.

Bio

Norene Leddy is a video and installation artist, currently living in Jersey City and working in Brooklyn. She received her BFA from Boston University (1994), and MFA from Parsons School of Design (2000). She has taught and lectured at Parsons School of Design, Massachusetts College of Art, Globe Institute of Technology, 92nd St. Y, Framingham State College and Frederick Institute of Technology, Cyprus. Her work has been exhibited in New York and internationally, and her awards include a Fulbright Fellowship to Cyprus (2000-2001) and residencies at the Millay Colony for the Arts (1998) and the Eyebeam Center for Art and Technology (2006).

Basic Supply List

- sketchbook (8.5 x 11in)
- glue stick
- pens, pencils, crayons for sketching
- 3-ring binder notebook
- CDs/DVDs as needed

-digital still/video camera (optional)
Additional supplies will be required per class

Course Policies

Academic Policy

Students must report to class on time with their supplies and ready to work. Your attendance and arrival time will be monitored. In addition to the class time, you should also be prepared to complete out of class assignments and entries in your sketchbook. We look forward to a productive class; the success of the class is dependent on your attendance and active participation in the course. The due dates for your projects are final. **Late projects will not be accepted.**

Absence Policy

2 absence = verbal warning

3 absences = failure

3 lates = 1 absence (late means arriving 10 or more minutes after the beginning of class)

If you are sick, bring a note from your doctor or health services, otherwise your absence counts as a no-show.

Grading: This class is pass/fail. Your attendance, involvement in class discussions and critiques, effort and successful completion of all assignments are factors in your grade.

To pass this class, you are expected to:

- Attend every class.
- Complete all assignments on time, to the best of your ability.
- Contribute to all group discussions, and have constructive comments for all of your peers.
- Be self-motivated, working consistently and following through on the development of all projects.
- Look for inspiration through art/design related experiences outside of class such as exhibitions or books.
- Seek constructive solutions and improvements for each work.
- Seek information in and out of the classroom.

Clean Up

Cleaning up is vital. This classroom is shared, and nothing can be left on the walls or anywhere in the room. Anything left or forgotten will be thrown away. Please be respectful of your work, others and the facilities.

Course Outline

Week 1 June 19 & 21

Tuesday June 19

Objective: Introducing teamwork and observation; Exploring the LES

1. Meet on 4th floor of 2 West 13th Street, introduction to program.
2. Explore LES as a team and complete exercise.

Thursday June 21

Objective: Introduction to curriculum, Analysis, Site-Specific Art

1. Introduction & discussion: students will introduce themselves, and talk about their art and design experiences/backgrounds.
2. Introduce curriculum.
3. Review LES mapping exercise.
4. Brief introduction to final project.
5. Review our class blog (<http://sopis07.blogspot.com>) and weekly postings; introduce personal blog project.
6. **Project 1: Analysis of outdoor / site-specific art in NYC:** In groups, document your visit to one of four outdoor art exhibits in NYC, analyzing 2 of the works in-depth.
7. Tour of 55 West 13th Street to check out equipment center and UCC computer resources. At 6 pm meet in room I404 to and set up personal blogger and [flickr](#) accounts (room is reserved until 8:40pm).

HW: Analysis of a Site-Specific Art Installation, start creating your personal blog

Class Blog Entry #1: Respond informally to anything that was striking, confusing, enlightening, inspiring about the LES first night activity.

Week 2 June 26 & 28

Tuesday June 26

Objective: 2D mapping; Exploring drawing from observation as an analytical tool

1. Review personal blogs and flickr sites.
2. Discuss HW: Site-Specific Art Installation Analysis.
3. Choose preliminary groups for final project.
4. Introduce different ways of visually mapping information.
5. **Project 2: Mapping a LES Block:** With your group, visit Orchard, Essex, Ludlow and Grand streets. Choose one block on one of these streets to map, with each team member sketching a building in detail, and taking observational notes (building number, residential or business, etc.). The group will then make a collage map with the notes and drawings.

HW: Mapping a LES block

Thursday June 28

Objective: Exploring drawing from observation as an analytical tool; 2D mapping

1. Sidewalk chalking exercise: gender-specific hopscotch.
2. In-class exercise and discussion: Think of different ways to map aspects of day and night on your chosen LES block. Focus on observing activities/time – who is out on the streets at this time of day? What are they doing?
3. Discussion of psychogeography, other things to map (smells, emotions, etc.).
4. **Project 3: Day and Night Maps of a LES Block:** (due Tues. 7/3) In your groups, create a map of day and night on your chosen block of the LES. Start by choosing what you want to map, then think out how this phenomena might change based on time of day.
5. 6 pm visiting artist **Rebecca Herman** (<http://www.groupc.org>) will present her collaborative work with Mark Shoffner: drawing, video, sculpture, and installation. How does mapping feature in Rebecca and Mark's work?

HW: Day and Night Maps of a LES Block.

Class Blog Entry #2: Respond informally to anything you have learned, or saw differently, in connection with your time spent on the LES.

Week 3 July 3 & 5

Tuesday July 3

Objective: Studying residents of the LES; Thinking about ways in which research and biography can inform design

1. 4:15 pm **Cynthia Lawson** presents her IDC project with Altos de Chavon (<http://www.parsons.edu/idc>)
2. Review HW: Maps of Day & Night LES.
3. **Project 4: LES Portraits:** (due Tues. 7/10) Working with your team, create portraits of 5 LES residents. Each portrait should include a photograph, drawing, and transcripts of brief interviews. Each team must also figure out a way to present the information: book, collage, or power point presentation.
4. Look and compare different styles of illustration/portraits (Chuck Close, Daumier, etc.).

HW: LES Portraits project, respond to Cynthia Lawson questions on class blog

Get started on portrait project, as a team figure out your design format. Sign out any equipment needed from KU.

Thursday July 5

Objective: Studying residents of the LES; Thinking about ways in which research and biography can inform design

1. In-class work time, *LES Portraits*.
2. Meetings with each team individually.

HW: Finish LES Portraits project.

Teams must finish portrait project, and prepare for presentation Tues. 7/10.

Class Blog Entry #3: (postings from each group) Tell us what the class is focusing on as a group, and then tell us what your team is working on.

Week 4 July 10 & 12

Tuesday July 10

Objective: Learning to make a presentation in class; Understanding the role of biography in design

1. 2:30-3:30 pm **Cooper Hewitt** tour of exhibit "Design Life Now"
2. **1st Presentation:** Students will present mapping and research work they have done so far in the LES, including LES Portrait project. This will be in Q & A format, with other teams formulating questions for the presenting team.
3. Review of final project and objectives.
4. Meetings with each team individually to discuss final project ideas.
5. Equipment sign-out and demo, review equipment list.

HW: Written statement about final project, 3 paragraphs, typed. Sign out miniDV camera and audio equipment for the coming weekend 7/13-7/15, and a camera for Thursday 7/19.

Thursday July 12

Objective: Using technology as a form of narrative, analysis and presentation

1. 4:00-4:50 pm Visiting artist / illustrator **Alex Eben** will present his work.

2. Review written statements about final projects.
3. **Project 5: Portrait of a LES Building:** Over 3 classes, your team will create a multimedia portrait of a LES building. For this first class, they will focus on capturing sound and video images. The final piece should include video, audio, and still images (drawings, historical images, etc.).
4. Technical Tutorial: Using a miniDV camera and shotgun mics, signing out equipment.

HW: Work on Portrait of a LES Building.

As a team, go to the LES and choose your building. Sign out a video camera and mic from the KU.

Class Blog Entry #4: (postings from each group) Since your report last week, what has changed in the way that you see your project. Think about the following: Are you all agreed on the focus? Is the focus yet clear? What are some of the questions that you still have? Where are you going to look for the answers?

Week 5 July 17 & 19

Tuesday July 17

Objective: Using technology as a form of narrative, analysis and presentation

1. Introduce experimental film techniques: Maya Deren, Stan Brakhage. Think about unusual shots and camera angles.
2. 6-6:50pm Visiting artist **Rebecca Wexler** will present her documentary film work.

HW: Finish shooting all footage for Portrait of a LES Building project.

Thursday July 19

Objective: Investigating 3D objects and how they reflect culture

1. In-class work time, *Portrait of a LES Building*.
2. 4-6 pm Technical Tutorial: iMovie and iDVD in room I402. After that, workstations are signed out on the 8th floor from 6-8:40 pm.

HW: Finish Portrait of a LES Building project.

Class Blog Entry #5: (postings from each group) What did you learn in the critique with the whole group? How did it help? What were some of the suggestions that were useful? What suggestions will you reject? Why?

Week 6 July 24 & 26

Tuesday July 24

Objective: Identifying the Design Problem

1. 4:00-4:50 pm Visiting artist **Debora Warner** will present her mixed media work: painting, sculpture and video.
2. Portrait of a LES Building project presentations.
3. In-class work time for final project. Brainstorming session with each team. Each team will map out a plan of action for identifying and solving the design problem of their choice, based on the steps learned previously in the course: observation, research, etc. Team will assign roles to its members based on skills and interest.

HW: Visual presentation of the design problem

Thursday July 26

Objective: Identifying the Design Problem

1. 4-4:50pm Visiting designer and Parsons professor **Donald Hearn** will talk about his design work for companies like Dr. Martens.
2. In-class work time, visual presentation of the design problem.

HW: Visual presentation of the design problem

Class Blog Entry #6: (individually) How are you doing? What are some frustrations? What makes you joyful about being here?

Week 7 July 31 & Aug. 2

Tuesday July 31

Objective: Defining and presenting the design problem

1. Visitors from Integrated Design Curriculum (IDC) program at Parsons will discuss the program, and give feedback on student projects.
2. **2nd Presentation:** Visual resources presentation.
3. Class critique of presentations.
4. In-class teamwork on developing and revising the final solution to the design problem.
5. Evaluating the ways in which the team is functioning and not functioning.

HW: Beginning to solve the design problem

Thursday August 2

Objective: Solving the design problem; Effective teamwork

1. In-class teamwork on developing and revising the final solution to the design problem.
2. Discussion of other possibilities/problems with design solutions – what happens if your solution doesn't work? Could it be used in other ways, different from what you intended?

HW: Finalize solution to design problem, prepare final presentation

Class Blog Entry #7: (postings from each group) Post some visual material – with text – about your project. Explain why you chose to post this part of the project.

Week 8 Aug. 7 & 9

Tuesday August 7

Final class presentations, visiting critics TBD

Thursday August 9

Final presentations for the Parsons/SOPIS community