

Syllabus

**IDH2930- Uncommon Reading: Go Pro! Community (Bourriaud's *Relational Aesthetics*)**

Section 1G48 Thursdays 7<sup>th</sup> period in Hume Hall 0119.

Faculty Member: Dr. Craig Smith (csmith@arts.ufl.edu)

Office: Fine Arts Bldg. D, Room 335

Office Hours: Thursdays by appointment.

**Course Description**

This honors course will focus on the 1998/2002 publication by Nicolas Bourriaud entitled: *Relational Aesthetics*. Bourriaud released the book immediately following the curating and production of a visual art exhibition entitled: *Traffic*, held at the CAPC Musée d'Art Contemporain in Bordeaux, France. The book and the exhibition have led to an international series of events and publications affecting grassroots marketing campaigns, the programming of cultural institutions such as hospitals, schools, or museums; as well as the emergence of a critical debate amongst philosophers, historians, and economists concerned with the commoditization of voluntary human labor in social media, interactive art, gaming, and live public or civic programs.

During the course we will discuss the definition and development of service-oriented economies, their ability to create new cultural goods and services, and how Relational Art and its affects may continue to effectively operate in global art programming and media markets. We will complete an in-depth reading and analysis of *Relational Aesthetics* as a group and consider the references cited in the text including Umberto Eco's model of the "Open Artwork" and Michael Fried's criticism of commercial industries and the "Literalist" artwork. We will view examples of live, public events and interactive installations by an international range of artists, performers, and writers including Rikrit Tirivanija, Felix Gonzalez Torres, Thomas Hirschorn, Liam Gillick, Pierre Huyghe, Douglas Gordon, Carsten Höller, and Gabriel Orozco. We will consider the affect of *Relational Aesthetics* on recent cultural programming in Europe and Asia, as well as the ethical issues connected to the use of human beings as a cultural commodity in social media, the service industries, and grassroots marketing campaigns.

**Course Goals:**

1. Students will gain an advanced understanding of 21<sup>st</sup> Century socially-engaged media practices. Each weekly meeting will be able to provide all students with the research support necessary to create a unique 'relational art' event, programming, or marketing strategies. This goal will be achieved through weekly discussions focused on selected readings from the book and student-led introductions to each week's sessions.
2. Students will develop a practical use of historical models, economic theory, and relevant institutional references to develop curatorial programs, artist projects, marketing strategies for online or service-oriented markets. This goal will be demonstrated through short presentations by each student combining public speaking, literary media, and visual art or projected media.

**Delivery Style/Weekly Course Meetings:**

Weekly meetings will include a group discussion, similar to a seminar, considering the historical, institutional, and economic references cited by the book. This discussion will be introduced by 1 or 2 students and supported by the course instructor.

**Evaluation Methods/Grading Criteria**(ie original work for the Uncommon Reading course):

1. Participation in all class meetings including the completion of the assigned reading and active contribution to group discussions.
2. A minimum of one prepared oral presentation to the group that presents the key ideas of the week's assigned readings.
3. A new presentation composed during the course that combines a prepared talk with visual or other forms of media. Possible media may include, but are not limited to: GoPro! Video, 1<sup>st</sup> person video, POV video w/ commentary, Powerpoint, Keynote, Blogs, Websites, Web-based archives, site-specific tours/installations, Social Media Profiles, Instagram hashtags, etc. unique to the course and our discussions