

Extended Practices 4660-70

OUTDOOR SCHOOL

Fall 2015, University of Guelph

Professor: Diane Borsato

READING OUTSIDE

“Though the idea of a reading group isn’t new (consider Rainer Ganahl’s Reading Karl Marx and Kristina Lee Podesva’s D&G Reading Group Or How Do You Make Yourself a Body without Colours?), No Reading nonetheless poses itself as a space for experimental learning and discussion.

Simply put, we are suspicious of our own reading abilities, and the extent to which our readings are conversant with one another. No Reading means to offer a space within which to retrace the steps used in constructing understanding, productively challenging individual and collective ways through the realms of language and interpretation. To participate in No Reading is to invoke an exuberant not-knowing, seeking out moments of collective illumination. The strategies we have at our disposal are twofold: through the yoking of our discussion to a text; and inducing conversation, where possible, between text and specific, local, contemporaneous exhibitions and happenings.”

From **No Reading After the Internet**, a collective reading-aloud project by Amy Lynn Kazymierchuk, Alexander Muir and Cheyanne Turions in Toronto.

In the current historical moment dominated by screens and media distractions **READING OUTSIDE** will be a tool, an experiment, and a work of collaborative performance. Together - and in worker’s uniforms - we will read texts related to the themes of the course in various outdoor locations.

Only one student will be allowed a phone or laptop to check references, images, and definitions. One student will also be charged with documenting the activity for the class blog. We will read aloud and discuss the texts, while considering the implications of the contexts in which we are learning.

Students must bring: Coveralls, a field notebook and pen, a blanket to sit on, and a beverage and/or snacks if desired.

READING 1: INTRODUCTION TO LAND AND ENVIRONMENTAL ART

At the Radical Edge of Life, Introduction to and excerpts from [Art and Ecology Now](#), Andrew Brown, Thames and Hudson, 2014, New York.

Excerpts from *Beyond the White Cube*, and artwork profiles, by Michael Lailach, from [Land Art](#), Taschen, 2007, Cologne.

READING 2: PLANTS, ANIMALS AND MINERALS

Useless Creatures, by Richard Conniff, *The New York Times*, Sept. 14, 2014.
Mishkos Kenomagwen: The Teachings of Grass from Braiding Sweetgrass: Indigenous Wisdom, Scientific Knowledge and the Teachings of Plants, by Robin Wall Kimmerer, 2013, Minnesota.

Introduction to *The Rarest of the Rare, Vanishing Animals, Timeless Worlds*, Diane Ackerman, Random House, 1995, New York.

Excerpts from *Field Guide to North America: Flora, Fauna and Survival Skills*, Shawna Dempsey and Lorri Millan / *Lesbian National Parks and Services*, Pedlar Press, 2002, Toronto.

Selection of naturalist field guides.

READING 3: CLIMATE, ECOLOGY AND ENVIRONMENTAL ART

Excerpts from *Green Acres: Artists Farming Fields, Greenhouses and Abandoned Lots*, by Sue Spaid, Contemporary Arts Centre, Ohio 2013.

Excerpts from *Lucy and Jorge Orta: Food-Water-Life*, Princeton Architectural Press, 2011, New York.

Project profile excerpts from *Art and Ecology Now*, Andrew Brown, Thames and Hudson, 2014, New York.

Excerpts from *Urban Interventions: Projects in Public Places*, Gestalten, 2010, Berlin.

READING 4: NATURE COLLECTION AND DISPLAY PRACTICES

Interview with Mark Dion, from *Mark Dion: Contemporary Artist*, by Lisa Graziose Corrin, Miwon Kwon, and Norman Bryson. Phaidon Books, 1997, New York.

Fred Wilson's "Black Venezia": Fictitious Histories and the Notion of "Truth", from *Fred Wilson: Speak of Me as I Am*, List Visual Arts Centre, MIT, Cambridge.

Excerpts from *Nature Morte: Contemporary Artists Reinvigorate the Still-Life Tradition*, Michael Petry, Thames and Hudson, 2013, New York.

READING 5: INDEPENDENT RESEARCH

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