

Hampshire in Havana

Cuba Project Abstracts

Theme/Medium: **Visual/Studio Art & Art History**

The abstracts listed here are for projects done on the Hampshire in Havana Cuba program, related to the theme or medium of **Visual/Studio Art and Art History (photography, architecture, painting, print making, film, multi-media etc.)**. Projects are listed by year beginning in 2008, with the most recent year first and then in alphabetical order by last name. For questions about specific projects, please contact the Global Education Office.

Name: Yasmina Mattison Sudan

Year: S2018

Tutor: Armando Fernández and Lisette Solozarno

Title: "Research on the Cuban System on Education and Prevention of Natural Disasters: Facing the Inevitable"

Topic: Hurricane Education and Prevention in Cuba

Medium: Essay and Photo series

This past semester in Cuba I have studied the country's singular defense system against hurricanes and other natural disasters. I have found a five-fold answer to my research question, why is Cuba the safest place in the world during hurricane while is located in the sure path of hurricanes and continues struggles meteorologically? 1. The Revolutionary government's commitment to defense, 2. hydraulic development plans and infrastructure, 3. meteorological accuracy, 4. educated and informed public and 5. dedicated sense of solidarity. During my investigation I traveled to coastal towns and areas effected by tropical storms: Cojimar, Guanabo, Santa Fe, Jaimanitas, Central and Old Havana. I also noted the level of consciousness and education surrounding tropical cyclones in less effected, higher elevated areas such as Vedado. I embarked on this work with two tutors well versed in two seemingly distinct forms: environment science and research, visual arts and photography, who advised and guided my research.

Name: Frankie Colon
Year: S2018
Tutor: Mayra Rodríguez
Title: “Fragments Undressed”
Topic: Identity, Diaspora Politics, Spirituality, Mask Sculptures
Medium: Mask Sculptures and Performance

As an homage to the late dyke-Chicana-feminist Gloria Anzaldua’s unfinished thesis piece “Luz en lo oscuro,” this installation is an exploration of divine feminine knowledge in the modern era of globalized information and the hybridization of “culture.” From my own lens of diasporic belonging, I have created my own imagining of Anzaldua’s terms “Nepantla,” a borrowed Indigenous Aztec concept describing a spiritual realm in between realities. This series of mixed-media figures is the first stage of my thesis, a construction of ‘un espacio entre mundos y entre filosofías’ filled with my own personal pantheon of spirit guides. These *diosas* represent a process of cultural/self-fragmentation and recognition of all that is dissonant coming together to create a place of wholeness. Additionally, borrowing from Elaine Scarry’s theories from her work “The Body in Pain”, I attempt to make explicit and hyper-visible the trauma of rebirth, as roots are severed and new realities emerge. I engage with these questions: How might we begin to conceptualize a form of cultural production based on qualities such as radical envisioning and intuition, rather than solely giving weight to the scientifically empirical? How might an attunement to corporeal memory and spiritual methodologies aid in the creation of an empathic and interdependent post-colonial framework?

Name: Cori Cannavino
Year: S2018
Title: “Sombras”
Tutor: Anyelmadelin Calzadilla, Printmaker
Topic: Visual Arts, Print making, hand print making
Medium: Printmaking

This piece is about looking up and looking around. My project is a study of my own experience and observation of the quality of light in Havana. Each of these transparencies was created through a hand process of silk screen printing. In this piece I am exploring the relationship between the natural world and light. I created prints which could generate shadows themselves. I see shadows as existing in a space between physical objects and non things. In my work I am interested in creating environments that minimize the common distance between the viewer and the work.

Name: Zulay Holland
Year: S2017
Tutor: Zuleica Roman, and Gertrudis Y. Ortiz

Title: “A Romper el Silencio”

Topic: Activism, Queerness, Racism, Sexism, Homophobia

Medium: Series of Workshops and Handmade Multimedia Magazine

The Project “To Break Silences” (“A Romper el Silencio”) is a workshop/reunion space for black womxn/ non-binary¹ black people to talk about their experiences with racism, sexism, homophobia and a plethora of other ways in which we are socially discriminated against. Using the methodology found in Popular Education, I was able to co-facilitate 4 different workshops in which the objectives were:

Visualize and identify the plurality of women chicenegrx and African descendants

- To find common ground in ‘artivism’ of womxn chicenegrx and African descendants in the hip-hop movement, in the LGBTQ community, in heterosexuality and religiosity.
- To protect the integrity of the group of womxn/chicenegrx and African descendants.
- To create a platform to exchange information based on common interests.

Using this methodology, we were able to be able to create a space in which Black and Afro-Descendant womxn and non-binary people’s experiences were centralized as knowledge, facilitating our ability to deconstruct taught histories and reconstruct our own, from our self images as well as our socio-political positions. Within these workshops we were able to hear from the experiences of people from extremely diverse backgrounds, with varying ages, economic statuses, sexual orientations, and gender identifications. This work will be represented through a handmade multimedia magazine which contains theory, artistic contributions from participants, interviews, my own personal reflections and artwork.

Name: Jason Drill

Year: S2017

Tutor: Dannys Montes de Oca

Title: “Art-Body-Nation”

Medium: Essay

This project explores how contemporary Cuban artists use their bodies in response to nationalist discourse and their repercussions in art. I investigate how the experiential body provides spaces to alternatively imagine the nation, or for alternative expressions of nationalism to emerge. Eduardo Hernández Santos uses the bodies of nude Cuban men to express national identity as a contingent product of discourse between language, bodies, and nationalism, implying that the nation and body are in constant

¹ Non- binary refers to people who identify as gender non-conforming, two spirited, or as existing outside of the gender binary. Non-binary is used interchangeably with the word “chice”, the gender non specific version of chica/o. The letter “x” replaces “a” or “o” in order to emphasize and include varying genders within the group.

negotiation. René Peña's use of his own body to disidentify with the documentary subject parodies a history of documenting Revolutionary nation building, and his work questions how subjects become national in the first place. Susana Pilar Delahante Matienzo uses her own body and the bodies of others to express national belonging as a transnational process, delinked from territorial soil. Rocío García reinterprets the Revolutionary desire for *libertad* as an erotic desire to leave Cuba.

Name: Joel Bueno

Year: S2017

Tutor: Jorge Bermudez

Title: "The Walls Speak: Official and Popular Visual Communication in the Streets of Havana"

Medium: Essay

My project dwells on the visual and spatial communication: What do we say/institutionalize/define through visual images? I study how the visual defines us and how we are defined through the visual. I research how people exchange and understand images and symbols in particular and how they relate to each other in relation to national identity, history and representation. In Cuba today, one sees walls painted with revolutionary slogans, coexisting with other mural paintings made by spontaneous artists or anonymous people. In between the official street art, whether made by the government or by spontaneous artists moved by the Revolution, you find the anguished faces of souls, a masked man always accompanied by his question mark, and a happy zombie. While the current Cuban government once began as a revolutionary socialist movement, it has become the point through which power is centralized and the walls, a medium through which its power and belief systems are transmitted. Artists such as Yulier, Fabian and Ozmany, challenge this ruling state, co-opting the walls for their own empowerment and the empowerment of others.

Name: Sydney Burt

Year: S2017

Tutor: Jaime Rodríguez

Title: "The Plazuela of the Ursulinas: Foco de Centralidad"

Topic: Architecture, Urban History, Restoration in Old Havana

Medium: Architecture Research and Proposal

During my time in Havana, I studied the architectural and urban history of the city and was able to use my knowledge to propose a restoration project in Old Havana. The Plazuela de las Ursulinas has a rich history and was identified by the Office of the City Historian as a site with the potential to be an important urban center (*foco de centralidad*). Informed by a thorough analysis of the site's urban and architectural context, this project makes recommendations to fulfill this potential with expanded green space, a new building with cultural significance, and strengthened infrastructure of the existing buildings around the Plazuela.

Name: Graciela Rodriguez
Year: S2017
Tutor: Lourdes de los Santos
Title: "Roads"
Topic: Artistic Processes, Personal and Political Art, Identity
Medium: Video Ethnography

With this project I attempted to find a refuge in art that would allow me to ponder upon the artistic processes made by individuals in Cuban art. At the same time, I investigated the intersectionality between the personal and the political through art. When artists create a work of art, they are not always thinking that it could serve as activist purposes or if it will make its way in history of their country. However, many times artists create their works inspired by the present and the context that surrounds them. Through video ethnography I aimed at making visible the feelings involved in the process of creation of a work of art as well and its contribution to the development of society. I worked with four artists/art collectives: The Colectivo Artístico Trance, The José Martí Community Workshop in Old Havana, the visual artist and 'artist', Nancy Cepero and artist and visual anthropologist, Celia González. With the work I have tried to raise a red flag to the subtle changes that are affecting the human condition to somehow have a better understanding in the way through which individual identities are built in a given social context.

Name: Mikaela Gonzalez
Year: S2016
Tutor: Eduardo Hernández Santos
Title: "Art and Social Criticism: Revolutionary?"
Medium: Print, Collage

Throughout the three months I spent abroad in Cuba, I sought to understand the Cuban reality through informal conversations, daily observations, and encounters with prints and photographs from the Revolution. I attempted to unravel some of the complexities defining daily life in La Habana, my research finally taking the form of a collage that offered my interpretation of several pivotal shifts that have taken place since the 1960s. My mural-like collage contained my critique, beginning with pieces of prints and photographs from the beginning of the Revolution and slowly transitioning to my own prints and drawings that reflect what I have learned in my time on the island. My intention was to question certain issues I encountered, such as the weight of the patriarchy, the devastating role of tourism, the daily struggle of a low-salary state worker, the still-dominating imperial intentions of the United States, and the powerful influence of the divisa currency (CUC). These pieces culminated into a visual brainstorm, questioning if and how the economic crisis of the 90s and the now creeping presence of globalization have changed the faith and ideology of Cubans towards the power of Revolutionary socialism.

Name: Luca Higonnet-Faithfull

Year: S2016

Tutor: Irán Hernández

Title: Walls and Doors

Medium: Film

Mi proyecto consiste en una pieza de corte audiovisual sobre el consumo del cine y los medios masivos en Cuba. El video se apoya en la técnica de la entrevista realizada a profesionales de la industria cinematografica, así como a personas diversas, con el objetivo de mostrar la variedad de fuentes de información que tienen los cubanos de hoy. Además, intenta explicar las razones del auge y popularidad del llamado "Paquete", una forma de acceso a los medios informativos y de entretenimiento extranjeros. En el material se muestra cómo los cubanos siempre han tenido acceso al cine norteamericano, a pesar de la falsa idea que se tiene en el exterior de que Cuba es un país varado en el tiempo y aislado del mundo.

Name: Cray Novick

Year: S2016

Tutor: Lourdes de los Santos

Title: "Una Rosa Para Una Flor"

Medium: Documentary Film

Documentary video works use the microphone and camera to record an audio-visual index of reality. Rendering two-dimensional, aural-visual representations from this multi-dimensional and sensory space inevitably involves processes of synthesis, translation, and approximation—indicators of subjectivity and voice. This project is an exploration of Cuban memory and experience—the influential voices that shape perspective and the personal views that function within that context.

In this work, I (en) counter culture through interviews and engaging with the creative process. Art mediates a synthesis of information between the lived experience and the work formed. This film at once explores the formation of stories in Cuba through these mediums and their respective creators while forming a new story in their filmic retelling. Through this method, I hope to learn more about my subjects' voice, their personal narrative, and their relationship to popular tellings of Cuban history and culture.

Name: Hayden Lily Daiber

Year: S2015

Tutor: Anyelmadelin Calzadilla

Title: "Ubiquitous. Unique. Reproduction. An Investigation in Silkscreening"

Medium: Silkscreen

I searched for how I could create unique images from what is ubiquitous in Havana by, paradoxically, working with artistic processes of reproduction and appropriation. Using

the techniques of silkscreen and frottage, I explored ways to make fluid what seemed to be the inherent meaning of a repeated image—like, for example, Havana’s ubiquitous busts of José Martí—while at the same time considering how context alters the meaning. I made rubbings (frottages) of public sculptures and spaces around the city, such as the lions at the entrance of the Mariana Grajales Park and the relief at the base of the Martí statue in Parque Central, as well as ornaments on buildings that I later I abstracted in my work. In the process I both observed and participated in the public use of these spaces. These frottages, combined with my own photographs and appropriated images, are the basis for my silkscreens. My final set of silkscreen prints, as well as the *matrices* themselves, are appropriations that visually represent the popular images and objects that inhabit my everyday life in Cuba, as well as my ambiguous relationship to the cultural significance of these images and objects.

Name: Daniel Perlmutter

Year: S2015

Tutor: Dannys Montes de Oca

Title: “Between the Havana Biennial(s): Before the Biennial”

Topic: The Havana Biennial

Medium: Book

I came to Cuba wanting to study the Havana Biennial. Through my investigation, which was both artistic and curatorial, analytic and testimonial, I have missed the Havana Biennial. I was not in Havana during the event itself; therefore, I did not have access to the spectacle in question, only its surrounding area, planning, and organization. But more importantly, I could not study the Havana Biennial itself because I found it necessary to study its contradictions, its borders, and its multiplicities. The event has contradicting definitions, including a divergence of “official” and “unofficial” art worlds. It exists in the space of Havana, yet at the same time, as a node of the so-called “globalized art world.” I have made a book that is an account of these contradictions and my participation in and around them. Like the Havana Biennial, my book is bound in a single structure, yet it has many different entrance points. It acts as a document of contact between two dueling narratives, a site where different definitions of the Havana Biennial create friction, and, therefore, new energy and new information.

Name: Faustino Vidal (Tino)

Year: S2014

Tutor: Javier Castro Rivera

Title: Reglas de la Calle

Medium: Film

This documentary was inspired by *Suite Habana* by Fernando Perez. I filmed the life of a Cuban who has to “luchar” for a living, showing a single day in her life. Moving away from the traditional way of filming documentaries with interviews and talking heads, I

wanted to focus on cinematographic language, relying more on the images to inform the viewer. Additionally, I wanted to produce a film with no major climax or linear time line, as in Suite Habana. My film, "Reglas de la Calle," starts with the protagonist, Regla at the end of her day, making dinner and getting ready for bed. Next, we see Regla waking up in the morning and completing the multiple jobs she performs in order to make her living: washing and ironing clothes, making dulces to sell on the street, and cleaning staircases of nearby buildings. The film ends with Regla making her bed, beginning another day of "la lucha." Using only image, sound, and music, this documentary tries to have the viewer recognize the work Reglas does in a day both outside and inside the home.

Name: Naomi Romm

Year: S2014

Tutor: Diana Balboa

Title: "Interrupted Space: To Build From Fragments: An Investigation of Memory Through Lithography and Collage"

Medium: Printmaking, Lithography, Collage

"Interrupted Space" is a body of work that focuses on the human presence within the built environment, and the way in which this existence appropriately condemns a romanticization and fetishization of a city. Specifically focusing on my experience within Havana, throughout my process of studying printmaking, I attempted to create a body of work that spoke to my effort to rid myself of a romantic perception of Havana's architecture, and instead to focus on the realities of existing within this environment. By examining the bodily interaction within this built space, I constructed a series of abstract prints, focusing on the interruption of linear and geometric space with imagery that hints at a human presence and existence. Using various printmaking techniques, including linoleum, woodcut, copper plate, PVC, calligraphy, and lithography, this body of work not only represents my process of learning the art form of printmaking and its rich historical and contemporary significance in Cuba, but also symbolizes my personal experience as an observer and an outsider in Havana.

My project commenced as a study of the practice of lithography, as well as its historical and contemporary cultural significances. As I began to experience the physicality of the process, I began to assess the literal and metaphorical posture of my body as I prepare and execute a lithographic print. In terms of the conceptual aspect of my work, I began to focus on questions of space, memory, and the body. At the same time, I began drawing connections between my own body and the body that is a lithographic stone. As I progressed in my work, I began to use writing to reflect on my personal experiences in Cuba as well as on lithography as a site of historical memory on the island; also, I began to include collage work in my process. My final series of prints and collages addresses the lithographic stone as a barer of ghosts of previous drawings, as well as of the memories and histories that are held within my body as the material marker of familial and cultural remembrance. While the lithographs developed in their

own right, the collages were born out of the concept of constructing images from fragments of the prints, mimicking the weaving of memory.

Name: Nataly Arroyo

Year: S2013

Tutor: Rebeca Chávez

Title: "Retrato de huELLAS de Cuba"

Topic: Female Identity

Medium: Film documentary

While it is said Cuba is a revolutionary country where there are no limitations for women or the production of art, this falls short of reality. Drawing from a variety of Cuban films, all directed by male filmmakers, Nataly came to Cuba with the idea that the Cuban woman was little more than a victim of her condition of womanhood and all that it encompasses: an object for men to objectify the moment she sets foot outside her home; the housewife whose only place is the kitchen, something that Castro legitimized a few years ago when he gave all women a crockpot as a token of appreciation for International Women's Day. These identity markers not only defined Cuban women but also limited the construction and production of artistic voices to challenge these markers. Once in Cuba, Nataly realized that these constructions, while old, have left *huellas* in contemporary Cuban life. Therefore, she decided to seek out four renowned Cuban women artists in order to find out what they have to say in respect to these social and cultural constructions as women. Her questions came out of a curiosity of: Where and how do art and sociocultural constructions about women meet? How these artists who are also women navigate these existing sociocultural constructions and negotiate them in the production of their art? How does these women's role as artists allow them to become active participants in the formation of their own sociocultural identity? In what ways can their creative voices transgress existing sociocultural paradigms of what it means to be a woman for them and for other women as well? *Retrato de huELLAS de Cuba* is a short documentary in which Alicia Leal, Marilyn Solaya, Lesbia Vent Dumois, and Rocío García discuss their experiences as mothers, as artists, and as women who through their personal experiences or artistic endeavors are forging their own identities and whose creative voices are reimaginations of those social spaces. As **ELLAS** share their stories, the lines between culture, art, societal norms, censorship, race, gender, sexuality, and what it means to be a woman become blurred. **ELLAS** demonstrate that the definition of what it means to be a woman no longer means that you have to choose between being a mother, a housewife, an artist, but that they can be all that and more, something that should be celebrated.

Name: Nora Jenny

Year: S2013

Tutor: Norberto Marrero

Title: "Preferentemente antes de..."

Topic: Consumerism: Cubans vs North Americans

Medium: Printmaking

My project was formed from various prints made from linoleum and metal plates, two materials that require distinct and precise techniques about which I learned during my stay in Cuba. Together, the prints form a book with a non-traditional structure, and a box to hold the book also made artistically from prints. The entire book has to do with the fact that personal experience dictates opinion - in this case, within the context of consumerism. While the book speaks about the differences in the perception of general consumerism between North Americans and Cubans, each individual print that forms a page of the book speaks about one specific tendency or attitude of U.S. culture, juxtaposed with scenes of Cuban daily life, and a Cuban character performing a typical routine that relates in theme to the North American aspect, i.e., differences in: the influence of a popular product, advertising, the use of affection, and stereotypes that are formed when young. The box on the other hand is made from linoleum prints, and its images and narratives function as a metaphor about the suffering that consumerism can cause.

Name: Noah Loomis

Year: S2013

Tutor: Magda González Grau

Title: "Looking to the Future"

Topic: Cuban Youth

Medium: Film

This documentary film focuses on the lives and dreams of a few Cuban youth, using their families and interpersonal relationships as a background to paint their view of the future. Originally envisioned as a comparison between youth in Cuba and the United States, the project changed focus from the interviewees as a microcosm for a larger whole to the personal story of a few select people. The presentation will showcase three parts of the full documentary: the first about their relationships with their mothers, the second about their current work or studies, and the third about what they and youth in general want to do with their lives in (or outside of) Cuba.

Name: Kendall Meehl

Year: S2013

Tutor: Lesbia Vent Dumois

Title: "Pelear a Cuba"

Medium: Painting/Drawing

Many eyes outside of Cuba cannot see past the crust of government and tourism. In order to discover the heart of Cuba, I've found fruit to be the perfect metaphor. Between four main paintings/drawings and various element pieces I've translated *mamey*, pineapple, *guayava* etc. to represent the beauty of this island's interior. By overlapping fruit with humanity I've captured my own curiosity to peel open Cuba unveiling three

concepts: unity, struggle, and love. From exploring Havana and experiencing its energy, exposed mostly through music and stories, I've found what I believe to be a decent taste of truth. Cuba's deep history has left ripened details on its face, attracting many to gaze, but to actually pick it up and peel in search of colors, flavors, bitter and sweet, gives a much richer lesson. This idea has infiltrated my thoughts and vision for the past three months so my work has been created as samples of these.

Name: Katherine Swanlund

Year: S2013

Tutor: Janet Brossard

Title: Lost and Found

Topic: Individual identity through printmaking

Medium: Printmaking

This semester I developed a series of printmaking images which together create a narrative of the search for one's true identity amidst social constructs and expectations. I have worked in woodcut in the past, and this semester was introduced to chalcography and callography, which I used for this series of prints. The opportunity to study in a country that is, on a societal and political level, so opposed to that in which I live, has been amazing because in comparing the two, it has allowed me to step back to view a larger picture, which is the common experience of human beings and the ways that they interact with their surroundings. My project has reflected these changing understandings, as the theme developed from a praise of collective action, to a commentary on the impossibility of utopian societies, to its current state, which focuses on the individual journey and personal development, which is common to all humans regardless of the social constructs in which they live. To illustrate this sentiment, I used Pan, a Pagan deity of nature and desire. I chose Pan because to me, he represents the uncompromised natural being; guided by instinct and ancient internal knowledge, and driven by desire, free from oppression or self-censorship. In this narrative journey, Pan is chosen by the Planners (the few who organize societal structures for the masses) to police the people and maintain order. This results in chaos and negativity, as Pan's true nature is compromised and laws are enforced that protect social structures rather than meeting human spiritual needs. In the end, Pan reconnects with his pure self, and his inner divinity and power discovered.

Name: Monique Baron

Year: S2012

Tutor: Margarita Mateo

Title: "(Sin) Privacidad", "Si cocinas como caminas, me como hasta la raspita: A History of the Cuban Piropo"

Medium: Documentary Photography

Monique's field research was based on two multi-generational families living in Havana.

Their living situations are uniquely Cuban--their apartments may not be suitable for their needs, but due to post-Revolutionary housing changes, they have changed their needs to fit the apartment. Monique spent an average of four to six hours a week with each family. She photographed daily events within the household, attempting to understand how each family functions within the physical space of their home. Through interviews and conversations, she explored generational differences that exist within these homes. Monique's final project was a documentary photography exhibition of 25 color prints, each 40 by 30 cm.

Name: Katherine Huppert

Year: S2012

Tutor: Eduardo Hernández Santos

Title: Untitled

Topic: "Queer"/gay culture in Cuba

Medium: Paper Cut

Katherine's project centered on two key components: a general observation of "queer"/gay culture in Cuba, in particular the experience and position of queer/gay visual artists on the island whose work deals explicitly with themes of gender and/or sexuality and the technical training and production of paper cut pieces. Underlying this observation were several key questions: Can the specific ideas of culture and identity in the U.S. translate to the Cuban context? How do you create the necessary visibility to have a voice in society while living in a culture with practically no room for individuality? In what ways can you claim, or simply occupy, space in the public sphere while under multiple forms of censorship? Does a culture have to be concrete or highly visible in order to exist? She interviewed the only three visual artists in Havana who are openly gay-identified on their views of the gay underworld in Cuba, the motivations behind their work and viewers' reactions to it, and the ways in which they navigate both their artistic and personal identities. Responding to these interviews as well as her own perceptions while in Cuba, Katie produced three large-scale pieces in the art of paper cut under her tutor's supervision, which reflect some of the major themes and contradictions of gay life she observed.

Name: Danielle Cattan

Year: S2011

Tutor: Cirenaica Moreira

Title: "Fusion of Realities: A Collaboration with Cuban Female Artists"

Topic: Female Artists

Medium: Mixed media

Danielle's project centered around an exploration of Cuban female artists' experiences. Together with these artists, she created a collaborative mixed media piece about their joint experiences as women and as artists. Vitally connected to this, a key aspect of her project concerned breaking down the wall between subject and photographer. This

seemed particularly important to Danielle at this moment in Cuba given her observation that so many current (and particularly tourist) images of women in Cuba portrayed them in an exoticized and objectified fashion.

In the course of their collaborative production of joint canvasses and photographs, Danielle identified one seemingly key theme that emerged: the question whether one can be a productive female artist and remain on the island. She understood how anxiety laden this question was for her collaborators, and how the fact that all had chosen to stay, was reflected in the work they accomplished together.

Name: Dorothy Goldberger

Year: S2011

Tutor: Marta Núñez

Title: "Por lo menos, las mujeres jóvenes no están perdidas"

Topic: Cuban young women

Medium: Photography

In her field study project, Dot wanted to understand the radical differences between the lives of young women, compared to the preceding generations of women in Havana today. As a result of the Special Period, she argues, these women were born or grew up in the midst of severe economic and social instability. They now inhabit spaces and roles similar to their mothers, aunts and grandmothers, but in a new age and context. In her study, she finds that while these young women may share commonalities in their daily lives, they can have drastically different experiences from each other.

In a series of in-depth interviews with five young women ranging in ages from 14 to 26, and four Cuban authorities whose work is on gender and women, Dot explores, in their environments, the realities of the lives of these young women. Based on her interactions with them, she photographed and created with them a series of images that helped to represent aspects of their daily lives. Through this visual representation and a brief commentary involving the tentative conclusions she has drawn about their lives, she sought to offer insight into the experiences of young cubanas as they navigate their roles as women in their culture and society.

Name: Oskar Peacock

Year: S2011

Tutor: Lourdes de los Santos

Title: "Cruzando margines"

Medium: Film

Oskar's field study project involved the filming and production of a visual document centered upon an exploration of individuals or groups of individuals in three communities that have developed, out of their own volition, along the margins of the cultural, philosophical, and economic parameters of the revolution. His film attempts to explore these individuals and communities to get at a concrete personification of the

nature and scope of these transgressed boundaries. He observed, carried out interviews with, and filmed his three subjects in individual chapters: first, Samantha, the star of the drag queen show held weekly in the Cabaret de las Estrellas in the Havana district of Lawton; second, Yanel Lorretta, a transsexual woman; and third, residents of the Cuban-Haitian community who, beginning in the 1990s Special Period settled, and indeed created an "illegal" community in, La Piedra, a shanty town on the outskirts of the Havana district of San Francisco de Paula. The chapters look at the history of each individual/community, and seek to get at the fraught nature of living on the boundaries of the acceptable, vis-à-vis the larger society and the state.

Name: Robert Sakai

Year: S2011

Tutor: Eduardo Hernández Santos

Title: Las Habanas

Topic: Tourism in Havana

Medium: Photo, Graphic Design

"Las Habanas" is a series of satirical advertisements for Havana that uses images and text from guidebooks, interviews, and historical materials to compare a Havana created for and by tourists to a Havana more commonly lived. (La Habana profunda). "Las Habanas" emerged from R.J.'s desire to provoke a wide range of people to think about tourism and the production of cultural images in a useful, unconventional and accessible way through the use of art and graphic design.

RJ's graphic designs emerged from his three months of field study, undertaken almost entirely in Old Havana, the area reconstructed by the revolution specifically as the city's central site for tourism and tourist exploration. In his study, RJ situated himself in a sense as a participant observer: he understood himself as a foreigner, studying foreigners. He haunted Old Havana, and developed conversational relationships with Cubans whose work involved servicing foreigners in one way or another—specifically, the photographer who takes pictures of tourists on the steps of the capitol building (as had his father before him, using their old cameras); an artist who sold his work daily to tourists in an artist's market, and an old woman whose job it was to sweep clean one of the beautiful plazas that tourists so admire in Old Havana. RJ's photographs document well the work of these individuals, as well as the complex and sometimes ironic interactions between tourists, what they expect to see, and what they do see.

RJ's project speaks not simply to Cuban realities: rather, he raises critical and difficult questions for any society or country needing or wanting to encourage foreign tourism, and makes a valuable and unique contribution to an emerging rich literature on tourism and tourists.

Name: Carl Elsaesser

Year: S2010

Tutor: Nelson Rodríguez

Title: "What is Magical Realism?"

Topic: Cuba History

Medium: Film

"Space, sPace, spAce" is a short film that looks at the ways in which Cuba's written history, and more specifically (the revolution and Fidel Castro's speech to the intellectuals) have changed the writing spaces of several Cuban authors. It is a critical engagement with the gaps Cuba's history has produced and the ways the authors (Dulce Maria Loyenez, Alejo Carpentier, Lezama Lima, Reinaldo Arenas), through their examination and representations of these gaps, as well as, their literary, personal, and political livelihood, have become dynamically related to the present, past, and future of Cuba's history.

Name: Thais Guisasola

Year: S2010

Tutor: Rebecca Chávez

Title: "Ladies First?"

Topic: Identity

Medium: Script, Video

In a society where one's sexual identity and orientation is limited and controlled to fit the norm, actions that transgress and challenge expected behaviors reconfigure the meaning of citizenship and national identities. With this short script and video, I aim to be another voice reinforcing the importance of a society where different identities can coexist. This script/video is about performance in the content of Havana, Cuba.

Name: Celia Kitchell

Year: S2010

Tutor: Eduardo Hernández

Title: "To Study Art is to Learn How to Question Reality: Talking to 12 Cuban Printmakers"

Medium: Printmaking

Cuba has a long tradition of printmaking, and printmakers and artists in general have long played an important role in Cuban society. For my research I interviewed 12 contemporary printmakers on how they saw their work in relation to Cuban printmaking traditions and to Cuba itself. What do these printmakers have to say about the ongoing scarcity of the Special Period? About emigration? About the Cuban nation? About Cuban history? And what do their trajectories as artists show about Cuban art and Cuban society? I will talk about several of the 12 Cuban printmakers I interviewed, what they told me about art and Cuba, what I saw in their work.

Name: Eddy Mulhern

Year: S2010

Tutor: Josefina Suárez

Title: "Visiones de La Habana a través de un viaje cinematográfico"

Topic: Cuban Cinema

Medium: Essay

Cuban cinema since its foundation at the triumph of the revolution has always been a radical one, and not necessarily in terms of ideology. The earliest Cuban films utilized a radical form and narrative to strive towards a better world and perhaps a utopia. But since the fall of the Soviet Union the Cuban cinema industry has been forced to change for better or for worse. With changes in the industry, an artistic vision has also changed. I argue in my paper that the most recent Cuban films appropriate the aesthetic and narrative traditions of its predecessors to place it in new realities and problematize its theoretical conceptions. I chose to examine particular markers that I find important to Cuban culture which I explored in detail; the panoramic portrait of Havana and the Cuban journey film.

Name: Guillermo Ortiz

Year: S2010

Tutor: Jaime Rodriguez

Title: "Rediscovering Havana's Colonial Porticos"

Topic: Architecture or Havana

Medium: Photography

Cuba's 18th and 19th century colonial architecture exhibits a wide assortment of detailing and ornament of great beauty and expressiveness in its porticos. My original project consisted in photographing the most architecturally luxurious porticos of the historic center in Old Havana, but that original idea changed when I was invited by the City of the Historian's Master Plan Office to help them expand its digital photo archive. The archive was started in 2001 by a group of Hampshire College students under the supervision of Professors Jacqueline Hayden and Joan Braderman. With that new goal in mind, my tutor, Jaime Rodriguez and I, photographed not only porticos but also the buildings and empty spaces of 42 city blocks. During our photo sessions we realized that the porticos of most of the buildings--inspired by imported European styles but rethought and executed by Cuban artisans--had been 'redesigned' by their current dwellers to meet their pressing housing needs. For that reason, our work was, in a way, archeological, since we had to visually dig in order to identify the original architectural characteristics of many of these porticos under their new "architectural costume." We took over 1000 photos of these buildings and more than 18 porticos that despite their present neglect and an unbecoming appearance still retain an unquestionable beauty.

Name: Pamela Arbogast
Year: S2009
Tutor: Eduardo Hernández Santos
Title: "Homenaje a La Habana, consumado"
Medium: Photo-collage

Photo-collage: *Homenaje a La Habana, consumado* "Homenaje a La Habana, consumado" es una representación visual variada de la capital cubana. La obra se inspiró en cinco repartos y municipios metropolitanos: El Vedado, Centro Habana, Habana Vieja, Santos Suárez, y Alamar. Usando como medio de expresión la fotografía, la artista ha tratado de crear un paisaje urbano que habla de los varios caminos que puede tener la ciudad. También recrea espacios privados, resultado de su recuento con su pasado familiar. De descendencia cubana, Pamela ha descubierto una mitad de su historia y un cariño familiar inesperado. Por eso, su t'a y el barrio de Santos Suárez son el corazón de su fotocollage. "Homenaje..." es un intento por reclamar una ciudad siempre contada, y finalmente encontrada.

Name: Alicia Eddy-Quintana
Year: S2009
Tutor: Cirenaica Moreira
Title: N/A
Topic: Male identity
Medium: Photography

In many respects the history of Latin America has contributed to the rise and presence of the male-dominated social code of Machismo. My story begins with man's fear of losing power when their Other gains her own. This series of images began in Havana, Cuba in the spring of 2009 and will continue for years to come. It is a study, both personal and public, where identity and power are the focal points. I have attempted to create a figure of a man: a man who makes it easier for me to hate than love. This masculine figure has no reverence for me and therefore I often have contempt for him. Yet while my frustration with this man overpowers my ability to love him, I still have faith in him. Thus the images try to be respectful. They present the respect I have for him and the respect I wish was reciprocated. The images are close, detailed, and deep to show the intimacy I feel towards him while still displaying the detachment I believe exists. The camera serves as this separation. The lens of the camera allows me to get as close as possible while still representing a metaphorical severance. Thus, I am left with this contradiction. The photos are the beginning of my attempt to break this contradiction and to mend our fractured relationship.

Name: Hira Nabi
Year: S2009
Tutor: Rebecca Chávez
Title: N/A

Medium: Film

The film is set in El Vedado, in La Ciudad de La Habana in the spring of 2009. Fifty years after the Revolution, it looks at the life of a family living at a time of political change and controversy. Set against the backdrop of the housing crisis in La Habana, and strictly regulated emigration laws, the film tries to make sense of the poetics of space presented in this decadent and decaying city of desires.

Filmed entirely in La Habana, the movie follows Maylin, a young woman of 25, as she makes her way through life, completing her degree at La Universidad de La Habana, trying to break free of the social conventions and political restrictions that limit her will to create a new way of life.

Name: Tana Pierro**Year:** S2009**Tutor:** Lesbia Vent Dumois**Title:** N/A**Topic:** Architecture of the Cuban Home**Medium:** Woodcuts

Architecture is a part of visual culture that has always interested me. Not only does it change from region to region, but also, it holds within it the ability to speak about a society from a variety of different angles—culturally, religiously, economically, and so on. It is a piece of culture that is always present and always telling; even the absence of architecture is a statement about a society. The type of architecture I believe to be the most revealing about a society is the house. These structures are built for the people, not the state, and develop into their own entity, along with the family who lives within it.

This body of work focuses on the juxtaposition between the architecture of the Cuban home and the Cuban family that resides within it. The project began after noting the prominence of gates and ironwork that surround the houses throughout Havana. These gates create an environment of protection, and serve primarily to enclose, and separate living space from the public space of the street. They form part of what we might call an "architecture of inequality" that has emerged in wake of the scarcity and uncertainty that marked the economic crisis of the 1990's. As my project evolved, many of my prints began to be based around conversations I had with some Cuban friends. They told me that, although they like the sense of protection the gates give them, they can't help but feel trapped within their own homes. I understand this is only one point of view and does not speak for the whole country, but it still alludes to the constant state of protection that surrounds the Cuban home today.

My work, which is primarily done in woodcut, has elements of design pulled from the gates surrounding homes in Havana (specifically the municipality of Vedado), as well as figurative images. The images of anatomy are used to represent an entire community that is too diverse to place facial features to.

Name: Claire Weissbluth
Year: S2009
Tutor: Nelson Rodríguez
Title: "Corazón de la Ciénega"
Medium: Documentary Film

My documentary film, which is a collaboration with another young filmmaker named Luis Enrique Benitez, is a portrait of the lives of the people in La Ciénega de Zapata. The film captures their daily activities and documents the ways in which they live in a very poor, isolated, rural environment. Most of the people in the little town of Pálpite, where we stayed during the making of the film, make their living either by making charcoal or fishing for catfish.

There are four interviewees in the film: Dunia, a young mother struggling with the difficulty of being deaf and raising her son; an old carbonero who describes the changes he has experienced in his life making charcoal before and after the Revolution; "El Abuelo," who describes the process of raising animals and producing fruit with a cooperative, and Mar'a, a young woman with heart problems.

Making this film was a great chance for me to get to know the countryside here in Cuba; I feel fortunate to have built a relationship with various families there. They did everything they could to welcome us into their community, and truly opened their homes and their hearts to us. For this reason the film is called "The Heart of La Ciénega."

Name: Cory Cochrane
Year: S2008
Tutor: Pilar Fernández
Title: "Arte o Muerte, Venceremos: Social Practice Art"
Topic: Social Practice Art
Medium: Ethnography

More than anything else, I believe today that the work I've done in Cuba was an investigation. Drawing on ethnographic techniques, I've put together a contemporary look at what I call the "Cuban social practice art scene." Social practice art is defined in the realm of visual arts but utilizes art in social manifestations, generally in order to create a dialogue or call attention to something that the artists deemed as problematic or in need of change or discussion. More often than not, this work operates with specific pre-determined ethics/methodologies and is concerned with the direct relationships that are fostered with its audience. During my time here, I've looked at past and present groups (the majority of this work takes place inside of a collective) working in this socially minded vein, and have moved to understand both their objectives, as well as obras. This dual focus has taught me about the groups themselves, as well as the specific socius that these artists work within and how their work becomes a reflection/projection of the past, future, and present.

Name: Sasha Mishkin

Year: S2008

Tutor: Eduardo Hernández Santos

Title: "Hermanada: Cuban Life, Cuban Identity, from the Perspective of Cuban Women"

Medium: Photo, Text

In a country where multiple generations often live in one home, often even sharing one bedroom, where privacy is as hard to find as privatization and a crisis in material resources means few new houses are built, where numerous domestic responsibilities often demand the need for the cooperation of numerous family members, how does one distinguish the individual from the mass?

In a country where everyone seems to participate in a national sense of Cubanidad, where does one look for differences? One of the most pronounced differences I have found is that of gender. The responsibilities in the lives of Cuban women are distinct, as are their experiences. Though the state sought to socialize women's work with the triumph of the revolution (drawing them out of the domestic sphere and into the national labor force) the perseverance of gender norms and distinctions between men's and women's work generate very different manners of self-identification within the collective whole.

Furthermore, since the special period, racial, and economic disparities have become ever more visible, so that the Cuba lived by one is not the Cuba lived by all. Still, there exists a Cuba that defines the daily lives of its people and a Cuba in which the Cubans define themselves.

With this project I intend to explore, through narrative photos and text, variations of self-identification in Cuban women. The project is composed of the stories, histories, and points of view of three women, all of different ages, races, and locations within La Habana. Since generational influence is a strong force, due to the close quarters in which people tend to live, I have decided to focus this project on the interacting identities of mothers and daughters.

Different generations of Cubans often have different relationships to the state and to their statehood. A woman who grew up in the eighties or nineties, at a time of crisis, may see her Cubanidad as different from that of a mother or grandmother who experienced her youth in the sixties, at the start of the revolution. Yet their views and experiences may intermingle and inform one another. The narratives employ the words and opinions of the women documented to demonstrate their individual relationship to Cuba and to themselves.

Name: Wilson Kemp

Year: S2008

Tutor: Norberto Marrero

Title: "Relief Printmaking in Cuba"

Medium: Printmaking

Estas obras de xilograf'a que hice en Cuba constituyen un proyecto relacionado con la trascendencia de mi estilo de arte fuera de mi agradable vida creative en Los Estados Unidos. Aprend' muchas maneras diferentes en que se pueden combinar procesos y capas de imágenes. Algunos grabados tienen la influencia del contexto en que viv' rodeado de cosas orgánicas nuevas. Sin embargo, hay muchas mezclas de realidad y de sueños y el punto de vista surrealista que aprecié en mi entorno natural cada d'a. En general estuve influido por el espectáculo de los detalles de la naturaleza y traté de trasladarlos de manera simbólica e idealizada. Muchas de las imágenes están abiertas a la interpretación del público.