

FILM 136A S09
FINAL EXAM STUDY GUIDE

date & time:

Friday, 9 June 2009, noon-3pm, Studio C
the exam should take around 2-2.5 hours

blue books required

COVERAGE

- weeks 6-10 (inclusive; this includes the lecture material on Bill Viola in week 6)
- however, there will be one essay question that will ask you to connect a concept from the second half of the class with a concept from the first half; the concept from the first half will be drawn from the midterm prompt.

FORMAT

1st part: Film/Video Identification

- answer 8 of the 10 questions provided
- you will be given a description of the film/video (or a significant element in the piece) and you must provide the **title, name of artist, and date of the work**
- you will not need to say if it is a film or video
- 3 points each; 24 total

2nd part: Multiple Choice

- will cover readings, screenings, and lectures
- answer 15 of the 17 questions provided
- 2 points each; 30 total

3rd part: Short Answers

- will cover readings, screenings, and lectures
- answer 6 of the 8 questions provided
- answers should be approximately 3-5 sentences
- 6 points each; 36 total

4th part: Essay

- on readings, screenings, and lectures; it will ask you to discuss one film/video
- you will be asked to connect a concept from the second half of the course to one from the first half
- answer 1 of the 2 questions provided
- answer should be approximately 10-15 sentences
- 10 points

READING GUIDE

The following questions and phrases point you to key concepts in the readings. All questions on the exam that deal with the readings will

be drawn from these; however, as you can see, they do not provide the answers. Rather, they point you to where you should look for answers. Remember also, that this list is only for the readings; there will still be questions taken from the lectures, and you should also review the posted material on your notes on those. You should also review your notes on the screenings.

Haug & Koebel

- relationship between sexual imagery and formal structure in *Fuses* (23)
- how is *Fuses* in dialogue with *Window Water Baby Moving?* (26)
- going from artist model to using her nude body in her work – and the role of rage in this (30)
- politics and women's pleasure (35-36)

Grundmann

- gender performance as transgression and inhabitation and something punished (101-102)
- How does the film "pass" as both fiction and documentation? How does "passing" turn to "posing"? (103)
- the duality of the "phallicized image" in the gay male perspective; denaturalization of the relationship b/t the penis and the phallus; the "joy" of this (111-112).
- male masochism and the "essential 'core' masculinity": "gender bedrock," falling "together," gender performance as illusion; the relationship between authenticity and artifice, substance and surface (128)

Krauss

- monitor as mirror; narcissism as the condition of video art; not simply as the subject matter of video but constituting its medium; role of "instant feedback," body mirrored b/t two machines (51-52; also 57 [medium as psychological abandonment of Other for Self]; top of 59 [subject/object submerged; fall through "suspended space of narcissism"])
- *Boomerang* as an example of the "prison of a collapsed present" (52-53)
- difference b/t reflection and reflexiveness; symmetry and asymmetry; *Centers* and *American Flag* (56-57)
- modernism and the objective conditions of medium and subjectivity of artist (58)
- role of psychoanalysis in the movement from reflection to reflexiveness (58)
- why is *Vertical Roll* reflexive rather than reflective? role of time in this (60)

Tamblyn

- Michel de Certeau and the everyday tactics of the "weak" in creating multiple and makeshift meanings (appropriations; bricolage) from the materials of the "strong"; the "active consumer" (15-16)

- how are those tactics related to the avant-garde integration of art and life? (16)
- why was the "utopianism" of experimental video art (attempting to transform both television and the mainstream art world) based on a flawed premise of active producer/passive consumer? (16)
- *Paper Tiger Television*: mixture of "high" and "low" art; "behind the scenes" view of TV (Brechtian alienation effects and incorporation of "mistakes") (17-18)
- heterogeneous "impure cinevideo" diaries as undermining authority, certainty, completion, authenticity (18-19)
- impure cinevideo in Benning's *It Wasn't Love*: utilizing the limitations of the camera (22)
- Tanaka's *Memories from the Department of Amnesia* and the relationship b/t "scriptural economy" and oral culture (26-27)

Rosler

- two kinds of utopian critiques of video art: of broadcast television and technological/industrial culture (the culture industries); and of institutions of Western art (and the passivity of reception in both); this utopian critique as transformative (in the tradition of merging art and social life), making producers and consumers interchangeable (31)
- two "streams": surrealist "liberating" poetic stream (narcissistic and self-referential); informational stream giving voice to voiceless (32)
- museumization ("taming") of video art and its assimilation/accommodation into art-world institutions: the role of modernist "essentials of the medium" in this (how might Krauss fit into this process?) (33)
- Bürger: avant-garde transgressions against art world and social life; transgressions as liberation that tried to replace individual with collective anonymous practice; why did this fail? (39)
- Kaprow: avant-garde destruction of art takes place instead in the marketplace; this failure "succeeds" in "the church," in making the avant-garde "the academy of the post-war world" (39)
- Rosler's critique of Paik (and Cage): as an example of what Kaprow calls "anti-art art," or non-art becoming "more Art than Art-art"; the myth of Paik as formal, aestheticized entertainment; of myth as depoliticized speech (44-47)
- museumization, professionalization, and production values (49)

Boyle

- what was CBS "Now," and what do the circumstances surrounding it say about the relationship between underground video and mainstream television? (68-69); how can it be understood in terms of what Martha Rosler says about video's "utopianism"?
- what are some of the formal or stylistic characteristics of guerrilla television and what are some of the topics it covered? what is its relationship to broadcast television? (69-72)
- what was the primary focus of community video, and how was that different from guerrilla television? what effect did community

video's relationship to mainstream television have on it? (72-74)

- what helped spark the revival of guerilla video tactics in the 1980s? (77)

Mellencamp

- description of Ant Farm (200)
- Ant Farm's "postmodern" attitude toward real and imaginary events, mass or popular culture (202)
- how is *The Eternal Frame*, as an "authentic remake," similar to Jean Baudrillard's theory of simulation? (210-12)
- how is the incorporation of audience response (in Dallas and San Francisco) important to *The Eternal Frame*? how does this correspond to Gilles Deleuze's theory of simulation (which is different from Baudrillard's)? (216)

Skoller

- specularization and narrativization in conventional historical films that "recreate" the past separates the past from present (xv)
- how are the specter and the shard important in that ways that avant-garde film's deal with the making of history? (xv-xvi)
- Walter Benjamin's distinction b/t traditional historicism and historical materialism; how do they create different relationships b/t the past and present? which allows for an "active" reading of events? (xvii-iii)
- how is this related to Skoller's distinction between "representations of history" and "the stuff of history"? (xxi)
- new developments in avant-garde cinema since 1980; why does Skoller also emphasize formal and material elements? what does this have to do with the relationship b/t modernism and postmodernism? (xxiv-v)
- postmedium dialectic: reflexive medium specificity and constant technological change (xxviii-ix)
- "stranded objects" of "failed revolution" and their importance in filmmakers' returns (150-51)
- the act of making *El dia que me quieras* as mourning work; return and repetition in this (153-54); doubling and layering of representations (155)
- Guzman's creation of uncanny situations that create ambivalent connections between past and present (160-61); dialectic of loss and recovery (165)

Carter

- what is the relationship between autobiography and performance (as well as the fictive, the artificial, and the authentic) in Sadie Benning's videos? (746-48)
- how is Carter's distinction between 'Sadie' and 'Benning' part her argument about the limits of the self, autobiography, and coming-out narratives? (746-49)
- what are some of the transnational, transracial, and trans-sexual identificatory strategies used by Benning? how does

Carter address the potential for cultural appropriation? (750-57)

- how is the voice important in these strategies? (753-54)
- how do the autoerotic explorations and representation of Sadie's/Benning's lesbian body allow different types of viewers to 'know' her perspective? how is this a lens on the politics of sexuality? (759-60)

Trinh

- what is her critique of 'specialness' and 'authenticity'? how are these related to 'separate development'? (20-26)
- how and why does Trinh distinguish between these two types of difference: 'difference reduced to identity-authenticity' and 'critical difference from myself'? which does she see as more politically valuable? (26-29); which corresponds more to the challenges to stable subjectivity (or the conscious ego) in many modernist avant-garde movements? which corresponds more to Benjamin's idea of the aura?
- distinction between "speaking near by or together with" and "speaking for or about" (33); which corresponds more to "identity-authenticity" and which to "critical distance from myself"

Cha

- what are some of the ways that Cha uses the motifs of speaking, writing, and translation in her writing; how are these connected to the physicality of the gendered body? to history? to nationality (and language)? religion? consider especially pages 13, 17-18, 21, 33

Lippit

- what is meant by a "mnemographic machine" and how does it write and rewrite memories on film? (8 col. 2)
- cinema as memory (8 col. 3)
- breakdown, tension of elements; neurotic opposition b/t optical printer and projector and the dysfunctional relation to diegetic characters (8 col. 3-9 col. 1)

Bryan-Wilson

- why did July develop Joanie 4 Jackie – and how does it work as a distribution system? (183-84; 188-89)
- what is July's attitude toward technology in her work? and to polished presentation and improvisation? (185-87)