

ARCH/GD 030 - Writing the Manifesto - Karim Nader - Fall 08/09

Course Information

Writing the manifesto is a workshop and seminar open to architecture, graphic design and other students.

3 credit course – Class meets once a week.

Course Objectives

If we want the design practice to be engaged socially and politically, it needs to part from the superficial or the formal and stem from a strong passionate attitude. This course aims at developing this attitude through reading and interacting with engaged authors and through developing a manifesto piece. In this process, every student will write their manifesto and present it to others.

Course Description

The manifesto is the representation of a design philosophy. Every artist in their own field –be it painting or music, architecture or sculpture, cinema or literature, can use the manifesto form in order to project a personal vision of the practice onto the social realm: a document is produced and presented to the world in order to inspire others and produce change. As it acquires an audience, the manifesto becomes ‘activist’ socially and politically, it is an event that assumes a role beyond the boundary of the artist’s individuality.

This class is an opportunity to produce an event/manifesto. You will be required to think thoroughly of the stand you presently hold with respect to your practice, (be it Architecture, Graphic Design or other) as well as to deepen and articulate this stand in the form of a finished piece of work that uses and manipulates the techniques of your own field of specialization. As a group, we will ask ourselves why we realize that there is a need for the manifesto, how design is a relevant practice for its production, and finally what form is it going to take for each and every one of us.

Process

Every week, class will meet for three hours. One part of the session will be dedicated to the presentation and discussion of existing manifestoes and the other part will be a working session on every student’s manifesto in progress. Usually the manifesto is a written piece, but we will be open to other forms of presentation as well in later phases of the semester. The investigation of visual material, layout, text, speech, models, theatrics, etc. will gradually take more and more importance as we get closer to the final session where the manifesto is presented to the general public in the form of an open seminar.

Deliverables

- Weekly reports and mini projects.
- Manifesto Portfolio (includes sketches, reading quotes and reflections, class notes and comments, inspiration clippings, etc.)
- Manifesto.

Grading system

Assignments 1	5%
Presentation 1	10%
Assignments 2	5%
Presentation 2	10%
Assignments 3	5%
Presentation 3	5%
Final presentation	40%
Portfolio	10%
Participation and progress	10%
Total	100%

Discipline

Every week you are required to be on-time in class, that is: not outside in the lobby, nor on the street. Attendance will be taken at 4:00pm SHARP. Late comers will receive the grade of 40 for the weekly assignment. Absence or late-coming to a manifesto presentation will also result in a 40 for the presentation. Unjustified absences will be counted, and unless you bring a medical report, you get a 40 on the weekly assignment. Three unjustified absences will earn you a warning, and 5 will earn you a complete irreversible drop from the course. Whenever we take a 10 min break, you are required to be BACK IN CLASS after 10 minutes. Mobile phones should be completely silent during class time.

Beyond your physical presence in the course, it is your full attention that should be given.

Whenever someone is talking, please listen and do not engage in any side conversation as it will disrupt the discussion and the general concentration level. The atmosphere of the conversation should be smooth, where one person is talking at a time while everyone is available to respond after they are done talking.

Reading and listening

The reading assignments will be intentionally short, but dense and deep. That means that you should read them thoroughly, again in full-attention. You should read them a first time rather quickly (around a page per minute) to understand the main line of the argument, then you should go back to them and reread them in depth to understand the mechanics of the writing and the details.

Whenever you are given an audio material to listen to, it should be experienced in full awareness, in total silence and isolation. Audio material should be listened to at least five times.

Writing Assignments

Every week, you are required to submit a writing assignment: it is intended to be a free writing exercise that uses five quotes from the main reading. Whenever you quote, you are required to indicate that clearly by the use of quotation marks and to indicate the page from which you are quoting.

The atmosphere of the written piece should clearly reflect the spirit of the manifesto and more than just a repetition of the original text, it should be an expansion and an appropriation of its spirit into your own writing and being. It should express your own manifesto voice that is inspired by the original text.

The length of the assignment should be 500 words without the length of the quotes and should be typed and printed on no more than one A4 sheet. A copy of the assignment should be available with you for submittal at the BEGINNING of each class. Late or non-submitted assignments will receive the irreversible grade of 40.

Manifesto

The manifesto is a piece that is always in process. Do not be surprised if your final grade turns out to be low if you start working for it at the end of the semester. The weekly manifesto exercises are not graded, but they are important step stones towards the final piece. These exercises are thus to be taken very seriously, if anything, because you can get feedback on the work and improve it tremendously week after week. Also, every month, there will be a manifesto-in-process presentation, it is intended as a wrap-up after every phase of reflection, but should be MORE THAN just a recompilation of the month's work, it requires a strong conceptual effort to create a holistic and complete presentation. All in all, that is to say that if you work regularly and in a relaxed manner, you will spend the semester effortlessly and passionately while achieving great results.

Course Calendar

Week 1	Oct 7, 2008	Syllabus - Introduction
		A SCREAM
Week 2	Oct 14, 2008	OSHO 1/3 : Creativity
Week 3	Oct 21, 2008	Antonin Artaud : The Theater and its Double
Week 4	Oct 28, 2008	Björk : Medullà
Week 5	Nov 4, 2008	First Attempt
		A CONSTRUCTION
Week 6	Nov 11, 2008	OSHO 2/3 : Creativity
Week 7	Nov 18, 2008	Alain Robbe-Grillet : For a New Novel
Week 8	Nov 25, 2008	Alain Robbe-Grillet : Djinn
Week 9	Dec 2, 2008	Second Attempt
		A DREAM
Week 10	Dec 16, 2008	OSHO 3/3 : Creativity
Week 11	Dec 23, 2008	David Lynch : Catching the Big Fish
Week 12	Jan 13, 2009	David Lynch : Inland Empire
Week 13	Jan 20, 2009	Third Attempt
	Jan 23, 2009	THE EVENT

Bibliography and Filmography

→ indicates item used this year.

Spirit

Lao-Tzu, *Tao Te-Ching, A book about the way and the power of the way*, English version by Ursula K. Le Guin, (Boston and London: Shambhala editions, 1997)

Lao-Tzu, *Tao Te-Ching*, Translated by Gia-Fu Feng and Jane English, (New York, Vintage books, a division of Random House, 1972)

→ Osho, *Creativity, Unleashing the Forces Within*, (New York: St Martin's Griffin, 1999)

→ David Lynch, *Catching the Big Fish, Meditation, Consciousness and Creativity*, (New York: Jeremy Tarcher/Penguin, 2007)

Architecture

Jean Nouvel, "Louisiana Manifest," (www.jeannouvel.fr, 2005)

Poetry

Rainer Maria Rilke, *Ten Letters to a Young Poet*, English version by Stephen Mitchell, (New York: Vintage books, 1986)

Self-help

Chögyam Trungpa, *Shambhala, the Sacred Path of the Warrior*, (Boston and London: Shambhala publications, 1988)

"What the Bleep do we know?" Directed by Mark Vicente, Betsy Chasse and William Arntz, (Captured Light and Lord of the Wind Films, 2004)

Yoga

Jaggi Vasudev, "Dhyanalina, The Silent Revolution," (Coimbatore, Isha Foundation, 2000)

Philosophy

Martin Heidegger, "Building, dwelling, thinking," in *Basic Writings*, edited by David Farrell Krell, (London: Routledge, 1978)

Søren Kierkegaard, "Repetition," edited and translated by Howard V. Hong and Edna H. Hong, (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1983)

Folk wisdom

Antoine de Saint-Exupéry, *The Little Prince*, English version by T.V.F. Cuffe, (London: Penguin Books, 1995)

Literature

→ Alain Robbe-Grillet, "Nature, Humanism, Tragedy" in *For a New Novel, essays on fiction*, English version by Richard Howard, (Evanston, Illinois: Northwestern university paperbacks, 1965)

Alain Robbe-Grillet, "Joë Bousquet the Dreamer" in *For a New Novel, essays on fiction*, English version by Richard Howard, (Evanston, Illinois: Northwestern university paperbacks, 1965)

→ Alain Robbe-Grillet, "From Realism to Reality" in *For a New Novel, essays on fiction*, English version by Richard Howard, (Evanston, Illinois: Northwestern university paperbacks, 1965)

→ Alain Robbe-Grillet, "Time and Description in fiction today" in *For a New Novel, essays on fiction*, English version by Richard Howard, (Evanston, Illinois: Northwestern university paperbacks, 1965)

→ Alain Robbe-Grillet, "A Future for the Novel" and "New Novel, New Man" in *For a New Novel, essays on fiction*, English version by Richard Howard, (Evanston, Illinois: Northwestern university paperbacks, 1965)

Alain Robbe-Grillet, "Repetition," Translated by Richard Howard, (New York, Grove Press, 2003)

→ Alain Robbe-Grillet, "Djinn," Translated by Richard Howard, (New York, Grove Press, 1981)

Theatre

→ Antonin Artaud, "Preface: The Theater and Culture," "The Theater of Cruelty (first manifesto)" and "The Theater of Cruelty (Second Manifesto)" in *The Theater and its double*, English version by Mary Caroline Richards, (New York: Grove Press, 1958)

Music

- Björk, "Volta," (CD Audio, Mother, 2007)
Björk, "Vespertine," (CD Audio, Björk Oversaeas Ltd/ One Little Indian, 2001)
Björk, "Homogenic," (CD Audio, Mother, 1997)
→ Björk, "Medullà," (CD Audio, Wellhart Ltd, One Little Indian, 2004)
Björk, "2001, Vespertine Live, Royal Opera House." (DVD Wellhart/One Little Indian Ltd/BBC, 2002)
Pink Floyd, "Pulse," (DVD Columbia Music Video, 2005)
Ravi Shankar, "Chants of India,"
Glenn Gould, "Bach, Toccatas BWV 910-916," (CD Audio Sony Classical, 1963, 1979, 1980)
→ Glenn Gould, "The Complete Goldberg Variations 1955 & 1981. Disc Two" (CD Audio Sony Classical, 2002)
Glenn Gould, "Bach Partitas BWV 825 – 830, Preludes and Fugues," (CD Audio Sony Classical, 1993)
Glenn Gould, "Beethoven, Piano Sonatas, Vol. II Nos. 15 – 18, No. 23, Nos. 30-32" (CD Audio Sony Classical, 1994)
→ Bruno Monsaingeon, "Glenn Gould – The Alchemist," (DVD EMI Classics, 2002)

Cinema

- Alain Resnais, "Last Year in Marienbad," (DVD Studio Canal, 1960)
→ David Lynch, "Inland Empire," (DVD Studio Canal, Prime Pictures, 2007)

Mass

- Johann Sebastian Bach, "Messe in H-Moll." Karl Richter, (DVD Deutsche Grammophon, 2006)

Opera

- Jean-Philippe Rameau, "Les Boréades," William Christie, (DVD Opus Arte, Opera National de Paris, 2004)
Jean-Philippe Rameau, "Les Indes Galantes," William Christie, (DVD Opus Arte, Opera National de Paris, 2005)
Jean-Philippe Rameau, "Les Paladins," William Christie, (DVD Opus Arte, Chatelet, 2005)
Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, "Die Zauberflöte," Wolfgang Gönnerwein, (DVD ArtHaus Musik, Euroarts Entertainment 1992.)