

Through The Lens: Brain and Cognitive Science / Exposure

We would like to request support from the Council for the Arts at MIT to help fund the final public exhibition of photography projects by students of *4.341 Introduction to Photography and Related Media*, the graduate level *4.343 Photography and Related Media*, as well as photography independent study students. These are all courses in MIT's Visual Arts Program in the Department of Architecture.¹

The undergraduate course is working site specific with the MIT Department for Brain and Cognitive Sciences with the theme: *Through the Lens: The Department of Brain and Cognitive Sciences*). The graduate level course is working on a related theme of *EXPOSURE*. Both classes will exhibit their final exhibition projects in the new BCS building. The exhibit will be open to the MIT community and be inaugurated by a reception.

We see this as an exciting opportunity to draw attention to student art activities at MIT in a context not usually exposed to these types of projects, which mix artistic exploration with MIT's scientific heritage, and to stir cross-campus interactions.

Throughout the semester, students in the *Through the Lens* will address the theme through an approach that deals with cognition, vision, and memory translated through the medium of photography. The BCS is a collaborative research center that studies the way the brain and mind work together, to produce language, movement, memory and vision. Analogous to this, the students will test experimental procedures in the dark room, play with handmade cameras and negatives, and address issues of vision in their photographic methods and techniques.

The *Exposure* class will also address its theme both conceptually and technically. The photographic process is being presented as a means to artistically translate memory images, emotions, and thought processes, while experimental photographic methods are also being encouraged. The theme of exposure hints at both the literal process that film undergoes, perceptual exposure to an image and its multiple linguistic, coded and non-coded images, as well as the revealing of internal personal issues or processes through the art form.

In regards to the final installation, students will work together on conceptualizing the show within the BCS building within a narrow time frame. They will be responsible for designing and building temporary structures as needed and negotiate individual space needs with the requirements of the overall exhibit. This additional site specificity of the work extends the range of their work and expands their understanding of place and viewer in relation to their art. The exhibited projects from both courses will range from digital to large format view camera photography and installations, which will have reached their final production stages by the time of the installation.

¹ Instructor: Andrea Frank. TA's: Adele Phillips, Sadia Shirazi. Darkroom monitor: Reilly Rabitaille.

Cite as: Andrea Frank, course materials for 4.341 Introduction to Photography and Related Media, Fall 2007. MIT OpenCourseWare (<http://ocw.mit.edu>), Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Downloaded on [DD Month YYYY].

Impact on MIT community:

The concept for the exhibition is modeled after successful collaborations that have occurred in the last semesters, with the Broad Institute in the fall of 2006 and also with the Department for Nuclear Science and Engineering in the spring of 2007. These exhibits showcased great projects and attracted attention from the larger MIT community. The previous collaborations also demonstrate our expertise in coordinating with departments and in enhancing and enriching community interaction through our work.

The show will be a novel and outstanding opportunity for the Department of Brain and Cognitive Sciences, the Picower and McGovern Centers' community at MIT to connect with the Visual Arts, both conceptually and personally. It will also provide an opportunity to present the MIT community with a strong exhibit of photographic student work from the Visual Arts within the BCS building, an interesting juxtaposition for a building, which itself involved a multi-disciplinary team in its architectural conception, in its mission statement, and its work.