



## **GRAPHIC NARRATIVES**

### **DESCRIPTION**

This class focuses on the continuing application of graphic design to architecture problems, specifically narrative forms such as books, films, animations, and slide presentations. Narrative is derived from the late latin narrativus: telling a story. This class will focus on the imposition and implication of narrative both in design process and in explaining and articulating architectural projects. We will look at both the synchronic and diachronic aspects of narrative and consider the effect of media on storytelling. The class is designed to learn by doing therefore the emphasis will be on a number of short exercises that must be completed in the designated time. In the process of accomplishing these short projects, you will consider the implication and meaning of graphic imagery and language without overlooking formal issues such as color, balance, sequence, and composition. We encourage you to sketch extensively, experiment and take risks. This class is primarily about proposing visual ideas and solutions. Both quality and quantity are important. The ultimate objective is to develop your graphic skills and foster a singular design method. Personal understanding and individuality are paramount.

### **RESOURCES AND MATERIALS**

Roland Barthes and Lionel Duisit, *An Introduction to the Structural Analysis of Narrative*, from *New Literary History*, Vol. 6, No. 2, *On Narrative and Narratives*, (Winter, 1975) pp. 237-272

Robert Bringhurst, *The Elements of Typographic Style*, Vancouver: Hartley & Marks, 1996

\*Peter Brooks, *Reading for the Plot: Design and Intention in Narrative*, New York: Knopf, 1984

\*Alain de Botton, *How Proust Can Change Your Life: Not a Novel*, New York: Random House, 1997

\*Scott McCloud, *Understanding Comics; The Invisible Art*, New York; Harper Collins, 1993

James Wood, *How Fiction Works*, New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2008

Smartphone with Camera and Video function  
 Instagram account  
 Adobe InDesign

### **GUIDELINES**

- Always follow the format guidelines.
- Pin-ups will be a time to critique your work. You will have an opportunity to incorporate comments from these pin-ups before turning in the final version of each assignment.
- Presentation should be in slide format from pdf files that can be shared with the class.

**ATTENDANCE**

**Attendance is mandatory.**

— **You will receive a failing grade if you have more than 3 unexcused absences.**

— **3 unexcused tardies will count as an absence.**

**OFFICE HOURS**

— Office hours will take place intermittently on a sign-up basis.

**SCHEDULE****Sep 3 Introduction**

Brief introduction to the semester.

In class: Assignment 0: Write a biography that fits on one side of an index card.

Assignment 1: Choose five objects that when considered together suggest a narrative.

Reading: Brooks, Chapter 1

View: *Slacker* by Richard Linklater

**Sep 10 Review Assignment 1**

Assignment 2: Choose any film you admire. Describe the plot of the film in 5 sentences.

Summarize the same film in a sequence of 5-10 images.

Reading: McCloud: Chapters 3+4

Reading: de Botton: *How Proust Can Change Your Life*, Chapter 3, *How to Take your Time*,

View: *Boyhood* but Richard Linklater

**Sep 17 Review Assignment 2**

Assignment 3: Create a sequence of images that describe the interior of your apartment.

Create a single image of the same space and annotate in such a way so as to direct the viewer to see it in a narrative fashion.

Reading: Janet Malcolm, *Forty-One False Starts*

View: Alfred Hitchcock, *Rope*

**Sep 24 Review Assignment 3**

Assignment 4: Using simple video editing tools and your smartphone, create a one minute film that traces your route from your apartment to Avery Hall.

View: *La Jette* by Chris Marker

Reading: Robert Coover, *The Babysitter*

**Oct 01 Review Assignment 4**

Assignment 5: Create an illustrated version of the text *Cities and Signs*. Using Instagram create a sequence of images with the entire Calvino text distributed in the comment area. The texts should be in order but you may include as many images you would like and break the text into any units that fit your concept.

The first and last image must be the same.

Reading: *Cities and Signs* from Italo Calvino, *Invisible Cities*

Listen: RadioLab, *Loops* (<http://www.radiolab.org/story/161744-loops/>)

**Oct 8 Review Assignment 5**

Assignment 6: Take the front page of the October 8 print edition of the *New York Times* and transform it from a single page format to a multiple page booklet. The booklet must use only (and all) the elements of the front page. You may include either black or white pages as needed. Booklet should be 8x10" portrait format, no less than 16 pages over all.

View: *The Draughtsman's Contract* by Peter Greenaway

**Oct 22 In class work on Assignment 6**

Assignment 7: The next set of projects will focus on a project you are currently developing in your studio. The intention is to break down the project into component sequences and develop narrative strategies for both analyzing the project and articulating your approach.

7a: Describe your project in five sentences

7b: Describe the same project in five sentences changing the narrative approach, tense, person, or sequence.

7c: Create a simple step-by-step diagram of your design process

7d: Create a program timeline of the project.

7e: Draw a simple comic depicting a user's experience of your project.

7f: Create a storyboard your presentation featuring your explanatory text.

Reading: Koolhaas, *Strategy of the Void*, from SMLXL, pages 603-661

Reading: Koolhaas, *Byzantium*, from SMLXL, pages 354-361

View: BIG Escher Tower, (<http://vimeo.com/3504980>)

**Oct 29 Review Assignment 6**

Reading: McCloud, chapters 6+7

Reading: Koolhaas, *Junkspace*, from Content

Reading: SANAA: 21st Century Museum of Contemporary Art Kanazawa

**Nov 5 Review assignments 7a, 7b and 7c**

Reading: Office for Metropolitan Architecture: *Seattle Public Library*

Reading: OMA. *Domus d'Autore* - Rem Koolhaas: *Post-Occupancy*

Reading: BIG, *Yes Is More: An Archicomic on Architectural Evolution*

View: OMA Univ Studios User Experience book

(<http://m.youtube.com/watch?v=exS2FOJrZb8>)

**Nov 12 Review assignments 7c, 7d and 7e**

Assignment 8: Create a detailed and comprehensive presentation of your studio project using the materials developed in assignment 7 and employing the narrative techniques discussed in the early work. Format to be discussed.

**Nov 19 Review first draft assignment 8**

Present concept diagram

**Nov 26 Thanksgiving break****Dec 03 Review assignment 8**

Present complete sketch and full thumbnail.

**Dec 10 Final Presentation Assignment 8****FINAL DELIVERABLE**

Create a single pdf document that summarizes all of your work for the semester.

— Try and keep your file sizes reasonable if possible. (less than 4MB)

— Keep multiple pages in a single PDF. (PDFs, not JPGs.)

— Follow the following naming structure for files:

A4726\_LastName-FirstName\_OtherDesign#\_Date.PDF

— Follow directions for uploading files to the correct Dropbox folder.