

ART C100/ HISTART C106/ GEOG C100: Art & Ecology

60 Social Sciences (or on zoom) - Fridays 2-5pm

Registration link on zoom [here](#) (register the first time, and add the link to your calendar)

INSTRUCTORS:

Prof Asma Kazmi (she/ her), Department of Art Practice. akazmi@berkeley.edu

Office Hours: By appointment

Prof Sugata Ray (he/ him), Department of History of Art. sugata@berkeley.edu

Office Hours: Wednesday 11:00-12:00 on Zoom or by appointment

Prof. Sharad Chari (he/ him), Department of Geography. chari@berkeley.edu

Office Hours: Wednesday 1pm - 3:30pm or by appointment, book [here](#)

GRADUATE STUDENT INSTRUCTOR:

Tausif Noor (he/ him), Department of History of Art. tausif_noor@berkeley.edu

Office Hours: Friday 10:00-12:00 on Zoom or by appointment <https://berkeley.zoom.us/j/94354758100>

COURSE DESCRIPTION

What happens when an artist working with virtual and material ecosystems, an art historian writing on climate change, and a geographer working on urban environments come together to teach a course on art and ecology? Each of us strongly believes that any conversation on the environment has to be interdisciplinary in nature, and questions of justice, conservation, resource management, and policy have to be situated in a broader context of environmental and cultural politics. Put differently, water is certainly a natural resource, but it is also fundamental to cultural imaginations and resistance, as we know in Flint and North Dakota. In these places and elsewhere, scholarly concerns about “art and activism” were joined by contemporary artists, popular culture producers, activists, speculative architects, scientists, and philosophers, questioning our fraught ecological systems through their forms of cultural practice. This Big Ideas Course is a space where we collectively study, think, and make art about issues that threaten the planet today.

Art and Ecology is organized through five themes – the animal, the botanic, the oceanic, the geologic and the atmospheric. These five ecologies have prompted scholars, activists, and artists to represent struggles over the natural environment in different ways. We will be analyzing how human interaction with the natural environment has been shaped in the past and in the present. We will also be bringing into focus diverse ecological perspectives based on race, gender, class, and region.

We will be taking what we read into the world through various kinds of multi-sensorial activities or “practicums” that give us a hands-on exploration of earthly and ecological materials and processes. We will explore an array of creative strategies like drawing, making pigments, learning about mushroom and moss gardens, making speculative seeds, and various forms of community engagement to learn about a web of biological, cultural, and political interrelationships and how such engagements can generate art projects and practices.

As we face cataclysmic ecological alterations globally, the course asks: How can art practice, political ecologies, and environmental activism together challenge the strange brew of Eurocentric, capitalist and anthropocentric domination of environments? How have people at various places and times come together to refuse ecocide, to restore and remediate ecological relationships, and to imagine other ways of being with animals, oceans, plants, atmospheres, and geologic formations.

GRADES AND REQUIREMENTS

PRACTICUM JOURNALS

Keep a journal/sketchbook related to the practicum in each module. The journal might include drawings, photographs, writings and reflections (transcribed by hand), cut and glued images, small objects, or diagrams. **BE CREATIVE!!** We will ask you to photograph and post your entries on bCourses within 24 hours of the practicum. We will be checking the journals and they will be graded.

FIVE ECO EXPERIMENTS

You will create five “eco experiments” in response to each of the modules below. They will take different forms and might involve images, video, and text, as below. The prompts are described in each section. Make sure to draw on the material you have collected in your practicum journals.

MIDTERM CHECK-INS

For the midterm - in Week 7 - you are required to sign up to talk to one of us about your final project. We will have a sign-up sheet the week before.

FINAL PROJECT

Final project should be produced in consultation with professors and GSI, and with feedback from the midterm check-in. Building on your favorite of the five eco experiments, re-enact or reinterpret an art work we have studied or that you have heard of in the class. Mimic the form or structure, but do not aim for an exact copy. Think about the course content, and use the original as a spring-board or inspiration for your work. The final project should also include a 3-4 page written deliberation that engages the readings and course content, and ideas around the theme and art work.

GRADES:

Final grades are based on the following criteria:

Five Eco-Experiments: 50% (10% x 5)

Final Project: 40%

Practicum Journal: 10%

GRADING SCALE

97.5 – 100 A+	87.5 – 89.5 B+	77.5 – 79.5 C+	67.5 – 69.5 D+
92.5 – 97.5 A	82.5 – 87.5 B	72.5 – 77.5 C	59.5 – 67.5 D
89.5 – 92.5 A-	79.5 – 82.5 B-	69.5 – 72.5 C-	< 59.5 F

ABSENCES

We understand that we live in unprecedented times, and will practice kindness with regard to absences. If you have any COVID-like symptoms, remember that you will be using the symptom checker to come to campus: rest, physically isolate, and get well.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Any test, paper, report or homework submitted under your name is presumed to be your own original work that has not been submitted for credit in another course. All words and ideas written by other people must be properly attributed: fully identified as to source and the extent of your use of their work. Cheating, plagiarism, and other academic misconduct will result in a failing grade on the assignment, paper, quiz, or exam in question and will be reported to Student Judicial Affairs. See the policy [here](#).

STUDENT RESOURCES

Being a student at Berkeley can be highly rewarding experience, and there are different kinds of support to ensure this, whether through tutoring, advice on writing, support for the differently-abled, or services to help deal with pressures, stresses and (we hope this does not happen) tragedies and personal difficulties that interrupt academic life. If you need help determining what kind of support you might need, email your professor or GSI, or come to office hours or speak to them after class. We are here to help you learn and flourish especially at this difficult time, so if you are having difficulties, please feel free to reach out. Many useful equity resources are here: [Equity Resources at Art Practice](#)

- **Berkeley Student Learning Center** offers peer tutoring, writing support, and other academic resources, also online at this time: [Link](#)
- **Disabled Students' Program** provides a wide range of resources to ensure equal access to educational opportunities, including advising, diagnostics, note-taking services, and academic accommodations: [Link](#)
- **Tang Center Services** offers short and long-term counseling services to assist students with concerns including academic success, life management, career and life planning, and personal development: [Link](#)
- **The PATH to Care Center** provides affirming, empowering, and confidential support for survivors and those who have experienced gendered violence, including: sexual harassment, dating and intimate partner violence, sexual assault, stalking, and sexual exploitation. Confidential advocates bring a non-judgmental, caring approach to exploring all options, rights, and resources. [Link](#)
- **Fall 2021 COVID Guidelines for Students:** This is a very important resource for our time. We will ensure that we all stay safe and well through this course. [Link](#)

COURSE READINGS

Required readings are **on the course website on bCourses**.

THE BERKELEY LIBRARIES

The UC Berkeley Library is an important resource, but it can be daunting. Learn how to navigate it quickly in your academic career at Berkeley. While there are no tours, there are certain services during the pandemic [here](#). Also look at these [guides](#) to library resources.

COURSE OUTLINE

WEEK 1. JAN 21. INTRODUCTION: Why think about Ecology and Art/ History/ Geography Today? (ZOOM)

THE OCEANIC

WEEK 2. JAN 28. THE OCEANIC (ZOOM)

Readings for The Oceanic:

John Mack, "Concepts of the Sea," *The Sea: A Cultural History* (London: Reaktion Books, 2013), 72-105.

Édouard Glissant in Conversation with Manthia Diawara, *Nka: Journal of Contemporary African Art* 28 (2011): 4-19.

Marcus Rediker, "History from below the water line: Sharks and the Atlantic slave trade," *Atlantic Studies* 5.2 (2008): 285-297.

WEEK 3. FEB 4. THE OCEANIC PRACTICUM (Platform)

Artist presentation and speculative seed making workshop with Connie Zheng

ECO-EXPERIMENT 1: Imagine being an object or being (human or nonhuman) taking an oceanic journey. Describe the time, space, and motion. The experiment should take the form of an image followed by two pages of text. DUE on **bCourses before class Feb 4, 2pm**

THE BOTANIC

WEEK 4. FEB 11. (PLATFORM)

Mycoremediation Futures Workshop with Anuj Vaidya and Stephanie Maroney

Readings for the workshop:

Tsing, Anna and Elizabeth Pollman. "Global Futures: The Game" in *Histories of the Future*, eds. Daniel Rosenberg and Susan Harding (Durham: Duke University Press, 2005): 107-122.

Whiteley, Aliya. *The Beauty* (London: Titan Books, 2018): 1-29.

Malandra, Ocean. "EarthRx: How Community Mycoremediation Projects Can Clean Up Oil Spills Around the Planet", 2017, Pastemagazine.com [here](#)

WEEK 5. FEB 18. THE BOTANIC (SSB)

Readings for The Botanic:

Judith Carney and Richard N. Rosomoff. 2009. 'Botanical Gardens of the Dispossessed' in *In the Shadow of Slavery: Africa's Botanical Legacy in the Atlantic World*. Berkeley: University of California Press: 123-138.

John C. Ryan, "'Plants that Perform for You'? From Floral Aesthetics to Floraesthesia in the Southwest of Western Australia," *Australian Humanities Review* 47 (2009): 117–40.

WEEK 6. FEB 25. THE BOTANIC PRACTICUM (Location TBD)

ECO-EXPERIMENT 2: The botanic eco-experiment should take the form of your drawing based on the practicum followed by a page of text. Remember to reflect on the readings for the week, and bring the colonial into your piece. DUE on **bCourses Mon Feb 28, 2pm**

THE ANIMAL

WEEK 7. MAR 4. THE ANIMAL (SSB)

Readings for Animal:

John Berger, "Why Look at Animals," *About Looking* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1980), 1–26.

Karen Raber, "How to do Things with Animals: Thoughts on/with the Early Modern Cat," in Tom Hallock, Ivo Kamps, and Karen Raber eds., *Early Modern Ecostudies: From Shakespeare to the Florentine Codex* (New York: Palgrave, 2009), 93–114.

Taylor, Sunaura. 'Claiming Animal' in *Beasts of Burden: Animal and Disability Liberation*. New York: The New Press, 2016, 111-116

WEEK 8. MAR 11. THE ANIMAL PRACTICUM (PLATFORM)

Interactive performance with Irma Yuli Barbosa

ECO-EXPERIMENT 3: Move out in the world wherever you are. Stop and look into the eyes of a real or an imagined animal. Write two pages about the encounter, thinking about the arguments presented in the readings for this module. DUE on **bCourses Mon Mar 14, 2pm**

WEEK 9. MAR 18 (No Class)

MAR 20-26 : SPRING BREAK : ENJOY!

THE GEOLOGIC

WEEK 10. APR 1. THE GEOLOGIC (ZOOM)

Conversation with Seth Denizen

Seth Denizen, "Thinking through soil" - [here](#)

Readings for The Geologic:

Jeffrey J. Cohen, "Geophilia: The Love of Stone," *Stories of Stone: An Ecology of the Inhuman* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2015), 19–66.

Khazeni, Arash. 'Introduction: The Turquoise Ring of the Emperor Jahangir', *Sky Blue Stone : the Turquoise Trade in World History*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2014.

WEEK 11. APR 8. THE GEOLOGIC PRACTICUM (PLATFORM)

Artist practicum on grinding stones to make pigments, with Reniel Del Rosario

ECO-EXPERIMENT 4: Make a short (ca. 2 minutes) video on the animacy of the geologic. Feel free to bring human or other animal bodies into it (or not). You are welcome to use your phone camera. DUE on **bCourses before class Apr 8, 2pm**

THE ATMOSPHERIC

WEEK 12. APR 15. THE ATMOSPHERIC (SSB)

Readings for The Atmospheric:

Achille Mbembe, "The Universal Right to Breathe," *Critical Inquiry: Posts from the Pandemic*, April 13, 2020. [here](#)

W.G. Sebald. 'Air War and Literature' in *On the Natural History of Destruction*. New York: Random House, 2003.

Liboiron, Max. *Pollution Is Colonialism*. Duke University Press, 2021. 1-38

WEEK 13. APR 22. THE ATMOSPHERIC PRACTICUM (SSB/ Outdoors)

Atmosphere drawing workshop- Asma - and Sound/smell mapping

ECO-EXPERIMENT 4: Map your everyday atmospheres in the form of a montage that brings images (drawings, photographs) into the sound/smell/visual atmosphere maps you have made. DUE to share in class for the class party on **bCourses Mon Apr 29, 2pm**

WEEK 14: APR 29: CLASS PARTY (PLATFORM)

****Final Project Due May 10, 5pm on bCourses****