

Sacred Space & Cultural Studies

studio

Bermudez / Silvestrin

VAS

"Not knowing is most intimate ... " (Zen koan)

Phase I : PREPARATION

DUE Oral presentation & written work: Friday 6 Sept @ 2:00 PM

OBJECTIVE In this studio, you cannot start operating following old patterns, prejudices, and ideas. In other words, you cannot work until you are in the right (i.e., simple, essentialist, innocent) frame of mind and heart to do so. You will start by stopping. After you stop, you will tune in by tuning out the sensual distraction, intellectual noise, disciplinary compliance, and socio-cultural conventions that foster your unconscious dependence of ready-made solutions, phrases, forms, and the rest.

This means that some preparation is in order. During the next two-weeks you will be in a contemplative retreat. It will be a time of focused, silent, critical yet 'heartful' reading, intuitive meditation, and thoughtful and spirited writing. Given the nature of the effort, you will work by yourself although it would be natural if you seek dialogue to share/compare your insights or consider other perspectives. We expect to witness the result of your gained understanding in a format that is synthetic, essential, poetic, and clear.

READINGS You will be assigned a few texts (from the list below). Although your study should center around them, you may want to consider some of the others to expand your perspective. However, you must make sure you spend time contemplating on what has been given to you. More is not always more. In fact, in the **VAS studio**, more is less. Yet, less is always more, because it demands great discipline, concentration, intelligence, sensibility and effort to arrive to the most essential insights.

Voluntary Simplicity. Simple Living.

Elgin, Duane. *Voluntary Simplicity* (New York: William Morrow Co. 1993)

de Graaf, John; Wann, David, and Thomas Naylor, (2001) *Affluenza: The All-Consuming Epidemic*. San Francisco, CA : Berrett-Koehler Publishers.

Affluenza: <http://www.affluenza.org/>

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hPm7vI_cdbw

Claudio Silvestrin

Bertoni, Franco. *Claudio Silvestrin* —translated by Lucinda Byatt (Basel, Switzerland: Birkhäuser 1999) **NA 1123.S549 B4713 1999**

Silvestrin, Claudio. *Eye Claudio* (Italy: Viabizzuno, 2008) **NA 1123.S549 A4 2008**

Silvestrin, Claudio, Bertoni Franco and Celant, Germano. *The Non-materiality of the Material* (Turin, Italy: Umberto Allemandi & C., 2011) **NA 1123.S549 A4 2011**

Silvestrin, Claudio. *Essays (writings extracted from Silvestrin Architects website)*

http://faculty.cua.edu/bermudez/courses/bermudez-silvestrin/claudio_silvestrin-essays.pdf

Various, *Reviews of Claudio Silvestrin's works* (extracted from his office website)

http://faculty.cua.edu/bermudez/courses/bermudez-silvestrin/claudio_silvestrin-reviews.pdf

Design Process Philosophy/Attitude

Bermudez, Julio (2005) "Beginner's Mind: Design Mind", in S.Temple (ed.):

Proceedings of the 21st National Conference on the Beginning Design Student.

University of Texas, San Antonio (Feb.24-26), pp.1-8/ URL:

http://novicedesign.org/NCBDS/21/pdf/01_BeginnersMind.pdf

Bermudez, Julio. *The VAS Manifesto*

<http://faculty.cua.edu/bermudez/works/vas-manifesto.htm>

Suzuki, Shunryu. *Zen Mind, Beginner's Mind* (New York: Weatherhill, 1973)

Sensibility

Read the poetry of **Rumi**, the 13th Century Persian Sufi mystic.*

Visit at least one art gallery/museum in Washington DC (2 hour visit minimum)

PRODUCT You will communicate the result of your contemplative efforts in oral and written/graphic formats. The nature, length, and style of your presentations should be congruent with the insights gained. Suffice to say that your message should center in (a) the spirit of what has been considered and (b) advancing the search for your own true self with honesty and humility.

MODALITY Individual work

GRADE 5 % of the course grade

* I recommend this book *The Soul of Rumi*, translation, introduction and notes by Coleman Barks (New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 2002)