

Academy of Visual Arts
Bachelor of Arts (Hons) in Visual Arts Programme

VART 2135 Looking through the Lens

No. of units: 3

**Pre-requisite: VART1006 Visual Arts Practice II OR any GDCV courses offered by AVA
OR any Visual Arts courses**

Duration: 52 hours

I.1. Course Description & Rationale:

The world and its cultures are external before one looks deeply. As artists and as responsible citizens, ways of focused looking will help us to learn from, and benefit back to our society and the world.

This is a course on fundamental knowledge of lens-based media. The essential foundation provided in this course is not merely technical skill but ways of inquisitive looking. Looking is attentive and active while seeing is external and passive. Accordingly, supplementary to technical training, this course aims at broadening students' visual perceptions and sharpening their senses responding to the outside world.

Students will explore and experiment how lens-based media artists understand, capture, represent and interpret the physical reality. Technical workshops on camera obscura, optical theory, colour management, framing and composition will be offered. Field work of self-directed nature for practicing skills of observation is an important part of the course. Class assignments will enhance students' ability to look into details both in aesthetic realm and in cultural contexts.

Students will be working mainly on photography and moving image production that are essential craft for visual artists in various fields and in a cross-disciplinary manner. This course serves as a foundation for works of photography, moving image, visual narrative and interactive media. Students will be both technically and intellectually ready to engage in further experimentations of lens-based media creations in advanced courses.

I.2. Course Content:

No.		Hours	%
1.	History and theory of lens-based media	6	11.5
2.	Ways of looking and tactics of observation	14	26.9
3.	Operation of SLR camera on exposure and optical theory	12	23
4.	Basic darkroom technique	12	23
5.	Post production and colour management	8	15.6
		52	100

I.3. Intended Course Learning Outcomes (CILOs):

(Please take note of the PILOs for the overall BA programme in the Programme Document.)

Upon successful completion of this course, students should be able to:

No.	Intended Course Learning Outcomes (CILOs)
1.	Interpret a situation through a camera in various ways;
2.	Utilize acquired creative principles and technical skills to make lens-based media work;
3.	Critically analyze and discuss lens-based media works;
4.	Apply basic creative strategies regarding lens-based media; and
5.	Adhere to standards of professional practice and ethos.

• *More may be added.*

I.4. Alignment of CILOs with PILOs:

Learning Outcomes	<i>Please indicate alignment by checking '✓' the appropriate box</i>					
	CILO1	CILO2	CILO3	CILO4	CILO5	CILO6
PILO1.1	✓					
PILO1.2		✓				
PILO2.1						
PILO2.2				✓		
PILO2.3			✓			
PILO3.1					✓	
PILO3.2					✓	

** There may not be 6 CILOs, in which case, just leave columns empty.*

I.5. Alignment of Teaching and Learning Activities with CILOs:

No.	Teaching and Learning Activities	CILO	Hours
1.	Lectures on concept and theory of various ways of seeing by lens-based media artists.	1, 2, 5	6
2.	Field work to practice ways of seeing	1, 2, 5	8
3.	Technical Demonstrations and Workshops – Foundations: - Optical theory; - Operation of digital SLR camera (for both still and moving image productions), accessories and supporting gear.	2, 4, 5	8
4.	Technical Demonstrations and Workshops – Production: - Darkroom; - Location Shooting	2, 4, 5	14
5.	Technical Demonstrations and Workshops – Postproduction: - Image Enhancement with aid of computers applications.	2, 4, 5	8
6.	Discussions of assignments and critique	1, 3, 5	8

**More may be added.*

I.6. Assessment:

No.	Assessment Methods/Activities	Weighting	Alignment with CILOs
1.	<p>Fieldwork Project:</p> <p>Fieldwork project requires students to practice the learnt techniques and concepts in lens-based media. Students are required to identify, interpret, analyse and contextualise a given theme on a specific location through the lens.</p>	30%	1, 2
2.	<p>Term Project:</p> <p>Term project is a self-directed and research-informed lens-based media work to demonstrate originality, creativity and technicality. Students present the work in form of exhibition and submit a project documentation to record the creative process and reflection of employing lens-based media.</p>	40%	1, 3, 4
3.	<p>Professional Attitude:</p> <p>Professional Attitude does not necessarily define its own learning outcomes, but takes a look at 'how' the other, non-attitudinal outcomes are achieved. Assessment will always be based on direct personal contact with the student. Assessment methods include personal conversations – formal and informal –, class observation, individual and group-tutorials, and such like. Assessment evidence is continuously produced through attendance and participation class-records, public presentations, peer-reviews, evaluation of sketchbooks or visual diaries, personal notes of students and teachers, etc.</p> <p>For more information, please refer to the BA (Hons) in Visual Arts' Programme Document.</p>	30%	5

I.7. References (up to 10 books):

- Adams, Ansel. *The Camera*. Boston: Little, Brown, 1980.
- Adams, Ansel. *The Print*. Boston: Little, Brown, 1983.
- Ashe, Tom. *Color Management & Quality Output: Mastering color from camera to display to print*. Burlington, MA: Focal Press, 2014.
- Bate, David. *Photography: The Key Concepts*. Oxford; New York: Berg, 2009.
- Campany, David. *Art and Photography*. London; New York: Phaidon, 2003.
- Campany, David. *Photography and Cinema*. London: Reaktion Books, 2008.
- Cotton, Charlotte. *Photography is Magic*. New York: Aperture, 2015.
- Cotton, Charlotte. *The Photograph as Contemporary Art*. London: Thames and Hudson, 2014.
- Ferguson, Russell. *Perfect Likeness: Photography & Composition*. Munich: Prestel, 2015.
- Meigh-Andrews, Chris. *A History Of Video Art, The Development Of Form And Function*. Oxford: Berg, 2006.
- Renov, Michael, and Brika Suderburg, (eds). *Resolutions, Contemporary Video Practices*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1996.
- Szarkowski, John. *Looking at Photographs: 100 pictures from the collection of the Museum of Modern Art*. New York: Museum of Modern Art, 1973.
- Szarkowski, John. *The Photographer's Eye*. New York: Museum of Modern Art, 2007.

I.8. Academic Integrity:

Students will endeavour to only claim work that they have actually produced themselves. Claiming the work of others is considered plagiarism, and will be dealt with under the academic policies of the university.

I.9. Health and Safety:

Every effort will be made to comply with the intent of Hong Kong's law or acts and the University's policies to maintain a safe and healthy working environment.

I.10. Final Note:

The instructor reserves the right to modify the class and the syllabus or the schedule to adjust to the dynamics of the particular group or to take advantage of opportunities that may arise.