

RCAH 291 ARTS WORKSHOP

PAINTING MURALS, CROSSING BORDERS

RESIDENTIAL COLLEGE IN THE ARTS & HUMANITIES
MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY, SPRING 2014

TIME T+TH 12:40-2:30

CLASSROOM SNYDER C202 AFTER FIRST SESSION OFFICE C230J SNYDER HALL
MEET IN ART STUDIO PHONE (517) 884-1323

PROFESSOR DYLAN MINER, PHD

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OFFICE HOURS TH 2:30-3:30

"The highest, the most logical, the purest and strongest form of painting is the mural. It is also the most disinterested form, for it cannot be made a matter of private gain; it cannot be hidden away for the benefit of a certain privileged few. It is for the people. It is for ALL."

- José Clemente Orozco (1883-1949), Mexican muralist

'Borders are set up to define places that are safe and unsafe, to distinguish *us* from *them*. A border is a dividing line, a narrow strip along a steep edge. A borderland is a vague and undetermined place created by the emotional residue of an unnatural boundary. It is in a constant state of transition. The prohibited and forbidden are its inhabitants.'

- Gloria Anzaldúa, *Borderlands/La Frontera: The New Mestiza* (1987)

'Border culture is a polysemantic term. Stepping outside of one's culture is equivalent to walking outside of the law.'

- Guillermo Gómez-Peña, *Warrior for Gringostroika* (1993)

COURSE DESCRIPTION

In this new course, RCAH and CAMP students will collaborate to produce a series of on-campus murals in Holden Hall, as well as illustrations for a book written by Lansing-area Latino youth. As part of the course, students will learn basic mural techniques, study the history of muralism and graffiti, and investigate 'border studies', paying close attention to the role of local issues along both the US-Mexico and US-Canada borders. We will also learn basic printmaking, while making book illustrations. Central to this class will be artistic collaboration and using art (particularly murals and prints) to visually communicate a form of transcultural collaboration. We will think about and employ art as a literal (and metaphorical) way to cross borders (and interrogate border issues). The course will begin with a discussion on mural history in the Americas, focusing on Mexico, US, and Latin America. We will pay particular attention to murals near the US-Mexico and US-Canada borders, as well as theorize 'border crossings'.

OBJECTIVES

Due to the interdisciplinarity of this workshop, the goals and objectives are likewise multiple. By discussing, analyzing, and making art, students will accomplish the following:

- Produce individual and collective artworks;
- Understand and utilize various mural techniques, terms, and issues;
- Appreciate and utilize basic printmaking techniques;
- Examine the complex role that art plays in contemporary society;
- Investigate the history of art and visual cultures;
- Explain how and why we create meaning through art;
- Interpret the multiple meanings of art;
- Recognize the potential to transform the world through art;
- Comprehend 'borders' and their roles in contemporary society;



