

**CURRICULUM
VITALITY**

**POOR FARM
SUMMER SCHOOL
2012**

INTRODUCTION

I wrote this curriculum as a proposal. It can be altered to create a useable curriculum for Poor Farm Summer School, or simply used as a conversation starter about philosophies of education. It also journals experiences from the past two years at Poor Farm. This year I can't attend, so I made this to contribute, even if it's only read by flashlight in a tent shortly before the annual thunderstorm, abandoned in a mud puddle on a sprint to the garage for beer.

A curriculum is understood as a course of studies that encompass an education. *Curriculum vitae* is a brief account of a person's education, experience and qualifications, the term Latin for literally, 'course of life.' Presented here is a variation of the two.

Curriculum Vitality is something that has more dynamic than a traditional course list. Poor Farm Summer School is by definition a lively place: site of a temporary tent village populated by artists, criss-crossed by summer insects and creatures, installed basement to attic to graveyard with temporary art projects, earmarked by a river and acres of rural Wisconsin landscape. Spontaneity reigns over the participants' intentions as the most effective schedule of activities throughout each day. The Summer School's strength lies in cultivating that spontaneity.

Isa Newby Gagarin

NOTES

FACULTY

Luke Aleckson

Lecturer, presenter

Kyle Borman

Kim Chee Excavation

Alison Coward and Kelly Filreis

Representatives and presenters of Travel Unltd and other projects

David Dunlap

Wild Card Faculty

Michelle Grabner, co-founder of Poor Farm

Lecture: *A Brief History of the Poor Farm*

Ceal Grabner, child-in-residence, founder of Ice Cream Social

Simon Ingram

Guest lecturer on painting

Brad Killam, co-founder of Poor Farm

Director of Poor Farm Development and Restoration, activities require all participants in woodworking, masonry, gallery prep, etc. (daily work activities TBA)

Lecture: *Welcome to Poor Farm: an Introduction including Safety, Conduct and Beer*

Chris Larson, core faculty

Daily walk to Little Wolf River, presenter of *Sphinx-like Riddles and Questions*

Kelsey Olson

Unusual Photography Methods Demo (during annual thunderstorm, materials generously provided by the McKnight Foundation)

LIBRARY

Every year, Aaron Van Dyke has contributed a reading list for students to peruse before and during Summer School. Sometimes he holds discussions on readings, or will have guests lead a seminar. In 2011, for example, Molly Zuckerman Hartung and Dana DeGuilio led a discussion on dissensus, based on an interview between Markus Miessen and Chantal Mouffe published in Miessen's book *The Nightmare of Participation* (Sternberg Press, 2010). The Summer School's library tends to be dirtier and less organized than a brick and mortar library: stacks of Xeroxed articles and dog-eared books end up scattered around campus. Poor Farm itself is also in the process of developing a small library, its collection available to Summer School participants and other visitors. Participants are encouraged to bring their own documents, periodicals and books to share during Summer School. Organized group discussions of selected literature rely on majority interest, otherwise they can be dispersed into small initiated conversations.

ARTIST PRESENTATIONS

In the past three years, participants have been required to give a brief slide show presentation on their work. By combining students and faculty into the Faculty and Course Descriptions section, I hope to diversify the format of these presentations. Straying from the constraints of a conventional art school style presentation will enable the participants to expand from an assignment oriented approach (i.e., something that is obligatory, difficult, boring) to approaches that suit the nature of their personal interests and artistic practices. If visual slides are conducive to an artist presentation, they should utilize it, but their approach should not be limited to a chronological survey. Slide shows should open up to include readings, video, presentations on topics related to an artist's practice but not of their actual work, and performative works (i.e., Alison Coward and Kelly Filreis's Travel Unltd presentation, Summer School 2010). If participants agree to expanding the format of artist presentations, it is imperative that they are also committing to more self-motivated research and preparation on their part before arriving at Summer School. This aspect of Summer School is one I feel most strongly about opening up to discussion.

Joe Smith, core faculty

Studio Visits Sans Studio

Tony Sunder

Dirty Lecture: Politics and Bureaucracy of Writing an Unconventional Exhibition Catalogue

Bruce Tapola, core faculty

Conversations offered on the smoking deck, Director of *Scribble Drawing Game*

Aaron Van Dyke, Core Faculty, Video Programming

Lectures: *A Brief History of Alternative Art Schools*, and *Good Morning, Mr. Wall: Graduate School Experiences in Canada and the US*

Katy Vonk

Large Scale Bubble Workshop (materials provided, no French children allowed)

Sophie Welles

Activities take place throughout Poor Farm grounds, locations and activities NTBA (not to be announced)

Molly Zuckerman Hartung

Lectures and discussions, presenter of her book *Notes on Susan Sontag* (Waymade Press, 2009)

Anonymous

Totally unexplained overnight appearance of Tracy Emin's *Everyone I Have Ever Slept With 1963-1995* (1995) on the Poor Farm lawn

Guest faculty and participants include artists and teachers from the Midwest, United States and international locations who arrive to install projects on the Poor Farm grounds. Presentations and conversations arise from casual situations, during morning coffee, amidst the installation process, around the BBQ pit, etc. These interactions are crucial to the Summer School's participatory facet. They can be emphasized by asking people to formally present a discussion in the garage, or be more relaxed and centered on casual interpersonal dynamics. This aspect of Summer School is the least quantifiable and yet most powerfully shapes the experience of Poor Farm.

Field Trips include Little Wolf River, Michelle Grabner and Brad Killam's house down the way, heading to town for groceries, and occasionally Milwaukee. This year, Michelle Grabner will be showing a survey exhibition in Milwaukee at Inova, running July 27 - September 23. An unfortunate disaster recently struck the Milwaukee-based Green Gallery West as it was severely damaged by fire on July 17th. The building in which it was located also housed artist studios and storage. This event will likely be of discussion at Poor Farm this year.