

# THE POETICS OF THE BODY

## Identity, Political Disappearance and the Resistance of Representation

Argentina, El Salvador, Guatemala, The Balkans

Professor: Claudia Bernardi

Mills College, Spring 2003

*Corpus: gen. cor'poris, Latin: "body"*

From the perspective of Law:

- a. A person.
- b. A group of individuals regarded as an entity.
- c. A number of persons, concepts, regarded collectively.
  - This course is an investigation of the body as a private and public entity.
  - It is an investigation on how the body is affected and ruled by legislation.
  - The body, affected by violations of civil and human rights and being subject to abuse, torture, racism, persecution and hunger.
  - The individual body and the body as part of the texture of a community
  - Art and the poetics of resistance through the representation of the body claiming its existence
  - The cultural refusal to forget the *"disappeared"*.

This course will examine these cultural and aesthetic variables through lectures, art, film, photography, literature and poetry

January 28- February 4- 11

### 1. Identity/ Self: The Argentine case

The "Dirty War" / Argentina under military dictatorship  
Institutionalization of illegal disappearance as a method of repression  
The Human Rights agencies/ the Victims/ the activists  
The Mothers/ The Grandmothers of Plaza de Mayo.  
The Children (HIJOS) of the "Disappeared" ( born in captivity)

The Argentine Forensic Anthropology Team: The Search for the Disappeared

“The Search for the Disappeared”, documentary, NOVA

**Argentine artists representing the disappeared and abducted**

Grupo Transmargen: Claudia Alcañiz, Carlos Cantore and Patricia Guerrero  
Antonio Heredia  
Ricardo Longuini  
Carlos Alonso  
Graciela Sacco  
Fernando Atilio Traverso  
Grupo de Arte Callejero  
Marcelo Brodsky

**Centers and Monuments of Memory:**

Centro de la Memoria, Rosario, Argentina  
Monument of Memory, Buenos, Aires Argentina  
Memoria Abierta

Documentary about Argentine Uprising, 2001  
Movimiento Piquetero, documentary

February 25- March 3-10

**2. The Case of El Salvador**

The Salvadoran Civil War, 1980-1992  
The creation of the United Nations Truth Commission: Documenting Horror  
The Prospect of “Due Process”  
Memory as a tool to contest Human Rights Violations

EAAF: Argentine Forensic Anthropology Team, science at the service of memory  
The communities in resistance

The Exhumations: El Salvador: El Mozote, La Joya, Cerro Pando, Jocote Amarillo.  
The survivor: Rufina Amaya Marquez

**Artists departing from loss**

Roberto Huezo  
Claudia Bernardi  
Photographers and War Correspondants  
Susan Maiselas, Stephen Ferry, Larry Towel  
“Denial”, documentary by Ivan Patri  
60 Minutes, Journalistic report about the massacre at El Mozote  
“Artists of Resistance” documentary about Claudia Bernardi, by Penelope Price

**March 15- 19: Spring Break**

**March 24: Presentation of First Assignment: Self Portrait**

**Students will present their art projects, addressing the reason for the work to be created in that format, technique, conceptual approach, historical background, etc**

March 31- April 7

**3. The Case of Guatemala: Massacres against indigenous population.**

International Declaration of Human Rights, the creation of MINUGUA Mission of the United Nations in Guatemala.  
Violation of Human Rights: The Case of the 2Rs, Forensic Investigation

**Photographers:**

Jean Marie Simon and Luis Gonzalez Palma

“Flight to Ixcán” Dance Collaboration

Kimi Okada, Claudia Bernardi

Political violence and its transmutation towards the beauty of movement

“Bitter Memories”, documentary, Nefertiti Kelly Farias and Carlos Bazua Morales

April 14- 30

**4. The Case in The Balkans**

The fracture of Yugoslavia

The massacres of Srebrenica and Vukovar

The Institutionalization of torture as a method of control

Photographer: Gilles Peres in the case of Bosnia.

Art and War: DAH Teatar, Belgrade, Serbia and Montenegro

“The Color of Time”, installation piece by Claudia Bernardi

May 5

**6. Final Presentation : Presentation and critic of Final Project:**

**MAPPING THE CONTINENT OF THE SELF**

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## REQUIREMENTS

This class is conceptualized as a **studio/seminar course**.

There will be two main projects through the semester to be developed by the participant students:

- **Self-portrait**
- **Mapping the Continent of the Self**

### 1) SELF-PORTRAIT

This first assignment will be created between January 17 – 31

**Presentation deadline: March 17**

Students must create a self-portrait in any media, scale or format.

The rendition of the self-portrait must be connected, conceptually, to the material provided in this class.

**Self-portrait presentation: March 17**

### 2) MAPPING THE CONTINENT OF THE SELF

**Presentation of Final Assignment: May 5**

Students will create art -work in any media, scale or format addressing the relationship of the self towards the vicinity (or not) to the texture of society.

- Students will refer to the material provided in this class.
- Students must have in consideration issues regarding private and public/ inner-outer self/ individual-collective/ singular – plural/ etc.
- Students may document in any chosen form (photography, documentary, video, internet research, etc) a current event (s) and its significance within local or international political and social manifestations.
- Students will record/ document the chosen event with an approach of criticism, confrontation or repudiation.
- Students will refer to the material provided in this class

In addition to the final artwork, students will compose a two to four pages essay, addressing the topic investigated, the reason for that investigation, its relevance in the creation of the artwork and the intellectual, emotional and aesthetic approach pursued in the final artwork.

**Final and last presentation: May 5**

