Journalism 492 – Photography Seminar: Handmade Photographs  
Instructor: J. Jason Lazarus, Adjunct Lecturer  
Class lecture/lab: 6-8p M/W  
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COURSE PURPOSE  
This course will expose students to a great number of little-known historical photographic techniques and alternative processes that will challenge students to creatively explore photography in incredibly unique ways. Acting as a bridge between digital and traditional darkroom techniques, this course will expose practitioners of either photographic path to a blended working method by introducing the element of the “hand” into digital creation and eliminating the necessity of film and enlargers in the darkroom. This course is geared for either the tenured or novice (non-degree) photographer and aims to provide a challenging environment where students are exposed to a veritable cornucopia of printing methods that will creatively distinguish their work from others as students seek to define their own unique signature style. As for our advanced-level majors, this course intends on expanding the notion of what contemporary photography is while also greatly diversifying your portfolio and molding you into even more highly versatile artists.

COURSE DESCRIPTION  
This course will introduce students to a wide array of historical photographic techniques and alternative processes while also providing contextual historical and contemporary information about each process. Students will explore rudimentary camera construction through Pinhole Photography along with an examination of light exposure through Photograms, Lumengraphs and Solargraphs. Students will also experience the process of making photo-reactive paper and harnessing the power of the sun for exposure through a multitude of printing-out historical photographic processes like Cyanotypes, Van Dyke Browns, Salted Paper and Albumen.

Course structure will involve a “unit”-like organization involving 3-week sessions for each group of processes. The first week will provide lecture material pertaining to the process, historical and contemporary visual examples and an in-person, interactive demonstration of the processes. The second week will entail hands-on demonstration of the process along with an opportunity for students to utilize archived personal material with the process. Finally, the third week will challenge students to create on their own, shooting new material for their processes and processing prints on their own. Students will, throughout each unit, be expected to work out of class on research of each process and its practitioners as well as develop a body of work that utilizes the characteristics of each process. Within the 12-week course, students will develop three new series of work, taking advantage of a selection of processes learned during each unit; three projects, due the fourth, eighth and twelfth week will showcase the methods learned. By teaching in this structure, students have multiple opportunities to refine their understanding and question procedures after review, practice and private thought; as well, students will have the opportunity to dig deeper and find a unique way to let the photographic processes speak for them, personally - something that is especially important to me.

For those yearning for a method to redefine their work in a new way, this course provides a hands-on approach to creating photographic art that harkens from an era long ago and well before the advent of digital. This course aims to develop and nurture a relationship between the photographer, their body of work and the prints they create by introducing magical, awe-inspiring and relatively unknown techniques, many of which gave birth to the notion of photography as the “Black Art”.

TEACHING PHILOSOPHY

As an instructor, I don’t want to just teach you the raw mechanics behind a historical photographic process or the rote memorization of the technical steps behind an alternative process – I want to share my passion for this highly varietal and multifaceted art form. It is my hope to show you how distinctly unique your photographic vision can be through including some of these little-known processes into your traditional photographic workflow, and that by doing so, I hope to inspire interest in each of you in a unique way to create photographic art that more closely visualizes your boundless imagination.

Three years ago, I had little prior experience with alternative and historical processes, even though I have ten years worth of experience teaching traditional darkroom photography. In those three years, I’ve stumbled a lot, refined my processes, explored dead ends and thrown my entire workflow to the wind and started over. Although it was hard work, developing myself as an alternative process photographer has been an exhilarating ride; I don’t regret the hundreds of hours spent in the darkroom each year refining my own methods and honing them to the point where I’m comfortable with sharing my passion with you.

Developing a passion for anything, including photography and the related alternative and historical processes, requires hard work; but students are never tasked to learn or perform anything outside of their grasp. I tool my lectures specifically to provide a wide variety of learning styles to insure that each technical aspect or assignment goal is thoroughly understood by all students. Substantial review is key to success, but constant use of foundational skills insures a student takes those loose facts and translates them to knowledge; throughout the entire course, we will reutilize concepts and techniques learned from the first week until the last. The “unit” structure of this course allow us all to review material covered for multiple weeks, building a deeper understanding of each process while also assessing my own ability to teach you effectively. I aim to leave no student behind nor do I ignore any unchallenged student – I want all of us, including me, to grow throughout this course. Critiques will challenge all of us, as each student will receive critical analysis from not only me but their fellow student; this will continue that development of your photographic eye as you seek to analyze and dissect what a photograph “is” at its core.

Connected to critique, we will spend significant time on developing a keen connection to your creative side. For those that have never accessed it before or those that have great experience developing it for another art form, we will, together, find ways to connect our ideas with our images, fundamentally through the effective use of formal elements, narrative and composition. Some of you may have a raw talent for this, some of you may struggle – but we will all take that journey together.

This course, as with any of your courses, can seem overwhelming from time to time. There are significant time requirements for shooting, developing, editing and printing images – all of which may require additional time to reshoot and start again. Failures and missteps can dissuade all of us – and they can easily suggest to us that quitting is the easier option. I am there with you, though, and will be a constant resource for you – through an open-door office policy, review sessions, email as well as phone – I want to help you along the way any way I can. Although you are expected to make a large time and effort commitment, I, as a dedicated researcher, artist, educator and family man myself, understand your plight to find balance amongst the chaos. Learning, as well as teaching, does not only happen in the lecture halls and the laboratories; it’s a constant flow – I want to be that resource when needed.

Above all else, I want this to be an enjoyable ride, one that engages you creatively, challenges you academically and changes you as a person.
COURSE OBJECTIVES AND LEARNING OUTCOMES

This course intends to:

- Provide students with the historical background and reference behind the creation and use of a variety of historic and alternative photographic processes
- Utilize visual examples of historical and contemporary photography created using these particular methods in an effort to familiarize students with new artists as well as serving as constant inspiration for their own work
- Provide in-depth discussion and step-by-step reference material of each process, its unique eccentricities along with any necessary chemical mixing processes
- Demonstrate in a hands-on, nurturing environment each photo process, cultivating a safe working process among the students while also building the confidence for students to work on their own
- Develop a link between the photographic work and its use of alternative processes, insuring that the “why” of the work (and its process) is always fully resolved
- Develop several bodies of work for students to include in their ever-evolving artist’s portfolio

At the end of this course, students should be able to:

- Confidently create unique photographic creations utilizing Pinhole Photography, Lumengraphs, Solargraphs, Cyanotypes, Van Dyke Brown, Salted Paper, and Albumen along with a variety of fusion techniques and related processes
- Understand safe procedures to replicate these processes within the comfort of one’s home without the aid of a traditional darkroom
- Have a good understanding of proper digital negative creation
- Fully understand a variety of emulsion coating techniques, judge exposure well and process (as well as tone) images using correct and safe procedures
- Build simple cameras from scratch utilizing scrap material and household items
- Add dozens of different photographic processes to explore further as you continue to develop yourself as a photographer outside the confines of this course

SUPPLIES, EQUIPMENT AND REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS

It’s very easy for students to spend substantial sums on photographic equipment, historical photo process chemicals, papers, textbooks and additional resources - it is my goal, however, to provide students with a nurturing environment that limits the financial burden as much as possible, allowing students the opportunity to explore deeper, refine and make mistakes with no major cost. Students will have the ability to check out camera gear, free of charge, from the department if their current resources are lacking; those that wish to utilize their own cameras need dSLRs (or film SLRs) that have full manual capabilities and interchangeable lenses.
Wonder what that $75 "lab fee" is? Your lab fee covers access to utilize both the Journalism Department computer lab and its two main darkrooms (both the film developing and printing darkrooms) 24/7, providing you with infinite flexibility to work on your own when it best suits you. This fee covers the cost of maintenance of the labs, access to all Adobe Suite products including Photoshop CS6, unbridled film development, film scanning and digital negative printing on our high-end archival inkjet printers. As well, with each demonstration of each alternative process, students will utilize departmental supplies of chemistry and paper and will only be required to purchase their own once they’ve determined which processes they plan on focusing on for each of their three projects. Expect to spend approximately $75-$200 on supplies (brushes, chemicals, paper and transparency paper) - but realize that this cost is spread out throughout the semester. Each process will require a unique set of supplies, provided by a variety of vendors. As we discuss each process, I’ll provide you with a detailed list of online and local resources to obtain the supplies and suggested deadlines to order each batch before your project’s due date. If this financial burden is too great, don’t drop the class - discuss matters with me.

Other supplies that are required: a used / unwanted apron, a box of nitrile gloves, safety glasses and a set of disposable clothing.

There are two books required for this course (and one suggested) - each will provide you with a variety of unique alternative processes along with perspectives from two different artists - a very powerful tool as you develop a workflow you’re comfortable with:

Book of Alternative Photographic Processes, Christopher James, 3rd Ed.
ISBN: 978-1285089317

Gum Printing and other amazing Contact Printing Processes, Christina Z. Anderson.
ISBN: 978-0984681617

Suggested: Experimental Photography Workbook, Christina Z. Anderson.
ISBN: 978-0984681600

IMPORTANT POLICIES
Just as you can rely on me to put forth as much effort as possible to insure your own unique success in this course, I firmly believe that what students get out of their courses is directly related to how much effort they put into it. To succeed in this class, a student must be fully engaged at all times, prepared and willing to learn and ready to put forth an above-average amount of effort toward their weekly assignments. That said, I want to remain a constant resource for you in times of need - do not avoid asking for assistance, as we will all learn better if we do it together:

- Student attendance is expected and required - without it, you will lose critical lecture, demonstrations, critique and project progress checks - all essential to your success in this class. As well, because this is a darkroom-based course, essential safety procedure will be addressed on a weekly basis - to have a safe lab, everyone needs to attend these safety briefs.
• Absences are to be treated respectfully: students are expected to contact the instructor prior to the missed class for any materials they may be missing and are required to connect with a fellow classmate for lecture notes and a review session.

• Excused absences are rare and are only accepted in the cases of medical issues (Doctor’s Notes required) or family emergencies - both of which must be arranged prior to absence. Prolonged absences spanning more than 4 class periods must be addressed directly to the instructor. After six unexcused absences in a 12-week class, students will receive a failing grade. Remember: you cannot learn if you’re not present!

• Being timely for lecture and lab times is a matter of respect; please be sure to be there before the class starts, as tardy behavior will insure that you miss significant material.

• We all have ongoing life matters that may, once in a while, get in the way. Assignments are modeled to insure that students have the flexibility to finish assignments well in advance. This class and its processes are full of dozens of variables that may make you miss deadlines if they’re ignored and it’s essential to be aware of this to succeed. If assignment due dates seem to not give you the structure you need to meet them, I’m more than willing to provide you with additional structure in the way of mini-deadlines to insure your success - just ask for this assistance. Because of this, and the unit-like structure of the class, late assignments are not allowed unless an excused absence has been accepted, as they will cause significant backups in course material.

• Students are expected to spend 10-20 hours during each 3-week unit on developing a photographic series - this requires approximately 3-7 hours per week, as long as appropriate efforts are given throughout the entire unit.

• Critiques are a huge part of advancement in the class - we all benefit from hearing what we all have to say about each other’s work; because of this, I urge students to participate at a high level during these critiques. Respect and civility is expected during critiques - content should be directed at formal and narrative elements of the work along with the process and its implementation.

• I provide expansive office hours for students to utilize me as a resource - although appointments are suggested, I live by an open-door policy. I want you to learn and to always have an opportunity to review, query or refine your understanding of anything the class offers. I’m also an avid email user - don’t hesitate to contact me.

• Although safety is key in the darkroom, as long as safety requirements are met, there’s nothing to fear in the darkroom - this is a safe place to explore and create. Student will be expected to wear old clothing, an apron that will never be used for anything else, nitrile gloves and, when mixing certain chemicals, protective eye covering. Adhere to mixing instructions completely; do not deviate from the demonstrations or material provided. Keeping a clean darkroom, including appropriate disposal of chemicals, is key to a productive darkroom.
COURSE SCHEDULE

UNIT 1
Week 1:
Monday:
- Introduction to class, review of syllabus, procedures
- Showcase of prior class work from previous students
- History lesson: where did all these processes come from?
Wednesday:
- Pinholes, the basis of all photography
- History lesson: the roots of pinhole photography and photographic art
- Showcase of historic and contemporary photographers that specialize in Pinholes
- Discussion: Camera parts and the Pinhole Camera
- Demonstration: Camera Obscura Room and pre-built Pinholes, shoot & develop your own!
- Regroup: Assignment for next Tuesday: Construct a Unique Pinhole Camera

Week 2:
Monday:
- Extrusive Pinholes: Solargraphy and the 3-month photograph
- Regroup: Parts of a Camera, shooting procedure
- Share: Show off your own unique camera creation!
- Demonstration: load cameras and establish exposure time, explore compositional opportunities, develop prints.
- Critique: how to refine existing cameras for next week
Wednesday:
- Photography without Cameras: Photograms and Lumengraphs
- History lesson: the roots of cameraless photographic expression
- Showcase of historic and contemporary photographers that use camera less expression
- Demonstration: in-lab creative construction of photograms and lumen graphs utilizing on-hand props
- Regroup: Bring a variety of small items next week - props, transparent objects, flowers
ASSIGN PROJECT #1

Week 3:
Monday:
- Regroup: Review of Photograms and Lumengraphs
- Demonstration: using personal objects, construct your own lumen graphs and photograms, expose and develop.
- Critique: discuss potential improvements to working method, visual and compositional qualities, abstract nature, etc
- Regroup: Review Pinholes, Solargraphs, Lumengraphs & Photograms. Bring new material to work on during Thursday’s OPEN LAB
Wednesday:
- OPEN Moderated LAB. Work on your projects on your own with one-on-one assistance in the darkroom. Bring in pre-made work that needs development, discuss additional refinements and series and narrative cohesion. Projects DUE next Thursday! Expect to work on your own in the lab to complete this assignment.
- Critique: Discuss preliminary work on projects, discuss redirection & refinement

Week 4:
Monday:
- Final OPEN Moderated LAB for Project 1. After spending the weekend shooting, refining and printing, share your progress individually with fellow students and your instructor. Discuss room for additional refinements, series and narrative cohesion issues and final presentation.
• **Demonstration:** matting demonstration. Focus on how to effectively present your series in a set of small-form frames. Discuss and demonstrate back matting, front window cutting and hinge construction.

**Wednesday:**
• Group **Critique: PROJECT 1 DUE.** Spend 2-hour period critiquing fellow student work. At the end of class, hang projects in Hallway Gallery. **QUIZ.**

**Week 5:**
**Monday:**
• **History lesson:** Introduction to Historical Processes: the Cyanotype
• **Showcase** of historic and contemporary photographers that use Cyanotype (Atkins, Dugdale)
• **Discussion:** Cyanotype Procedure
• **Demonstration:** Safety Lesson on mixing chemistry, step-by-step handouts, demonstration of UV box and Sunlight exposure methods & processing. Discuss digital negatives. Spend ~45 minutes creating Cyanotypes from on-hand material and pre-made digital negatives.
• **Regroup:** Assignment for Thursday: Students must email files to instructor prior to Thursday’s class with their own files to make into Cyanotype digital negatives. **Images must be new Material.**

**Wednesday:**
• **Discussion:** Creating Digital Negatives. Discuss different digital negative systems (Nelson’s PDN, James’ method) and demonstrate suggested method for this course. Discuss printing, appropriate preset settings for Epson 3800s and Pictorico Transparencies
• **OPEN LAB:** Take your personal Digital Negatives and create your own Cyanotypes with them!
• **Critique:** share your Cyanotypes, discuss refinements & issues within group

**Week 6:**
**Monday:**
• **History lesson:** Introduction to Historical Processes: the Van Dyke Brown
• **Showcase** of historic and contemporary photographers that use VDB (personal work)
• **Discussion:** VDB Procedure
• **Demonstration:** Safety Lesson on mixing chemistry, step-by-step handouts, demonstration of UV box and Sunlight exposure methods & processing. Discuss Cyanotype process versus VDB process. Spend ~45 minutes creating VDBs from on-hand material and pre-made digital negatives.
• **Regroup:** Assignment for Thursday: Students must print their own VDB digital negatives prior to Thursday’s class. Demonstrate new VDB curve and any other suggested modifications to Digital Negative Creation method.

**Wednesday:**
• **Discussion:** Toning Cyanotypes and Van Dyke Browns. Discuss Gold Toning & Selenium Toning VDB, Tea Toning, Borax & Ammonium for Cyanotypes.
• **Demonstration:** Toning Cyanotypes & VDBs
• **OPEN LAB:** Take your personal Digital Negatives and create your own VDBs with them!
• **Critique:** share your VDBs, discuss refinements & issues within group

**Week 7:**
**Monday:**
• **History lesson:** Introduction to Historical Processes: the Albumen Print
• **Showcase** of historic and contemporary photographers that use Albumen
• **Discussion:** Albumen, differences from VDB & Cyanotype
• **Demonstration:** Safety Lesson on mixing chemistry, step-by-step handouts, demonstration of UV box and Sunlight exposure methods & processing. Spend ~45 minutes creating Albumen from on-hand material, pre-made albumenized paper and pre-made digital negatives.
• **Regroup**: Assignment for Thursday: Students must print their own Albumen digital negatives (from new material) prior to Thursday’s class. Demonstrate new Albumen curve and any other suggested modifications to Digital Negative Creation method.

**Wednesday**:  
• **Discussion**: Making your own Albumen paper from eggs!  
• **Demonstration**: Matte Albumen process – take watercolor paper and albumenize it! Set up demonstration for next week’s Glossy Albumen demonstration.  
• **OPEN LAB**: Take your personal Digital Negatives and create your own Albumen with them!  
• **Critique**: share your Albumen progress, discuss refinements & issues within group  
• **Regroup**: Assign PROJECT #2. At this point, you’ve seen 3 out of 4 processes you can work with for Project 2. You are allowed to use Cyanotype, VDB, Albumen and Salted Paper (as well as any toned variants)

**Week 8**:  
**Monday**:  
• **History lesson**: Introduction to Historical Processes: the Salted Paper Print  
• **Showcase** of historic and contemporary photographers that use Salt Prints  
• **Discussion**: Salt Print, the similarities with VDB, the differences  
• **Demonstration**: Safety Lesson on mixing chemistry, step-by-step handouts, demonstration of UV box and Sunlight exposure methods & processing. Spend ~45 minutes creating Salt Prints from on-hand material, pre-made albumenized paper and pre-made digital negatives. Given the similar nature of Salt Print Process to Cyanotype and VDB, we’ll have time to demonstrate Glossy Albumen (which was created over the weekend)  
• **Regroup**: Assignment for Thursday: Students must print their own Salt Print digital negatives prior to Thursday’s class. Demonstrate new Salt Print curve and any other suggested modifications to Digital Negative Creation method.

**Wednesday**:  
• **OPEN Moderated LAB.** Work on your projects on your own with one-on-one assistance in the darkroom. Bring in pre-made work that needs development, discuss additional refinements and series and narrative cohesion. Projects DUE next Thursday! Expect to work on your own in the lab to complete this assignment.  
• **Critique**: Discuss preliminary work on projects, discuss redirection & refinement

**Week 9**:  
**Monday**:  
• Final **OPEN Moderated LAB** for Project 2. After spending the weekend shooting, refining and printing, share your progress individually with fellow students and your instructor. Discuss room for additional refinements, series and narrative cohesion issues and final presentation.

**Wednesday**:  
• Group **Critique: PROJECT 2 DUE.** Spend 2-hour period critiquing fellow student work. At the end of class, hang projects in Hallway Gallery, take down Project 1. **QUIZ.**

**Week 10**:  
**Monday**:  
• **Discussion**: Introduction to Contemporary “Alt Processes”, Exploratory Photography and Presentation methods, blending Photography with Printmaking, Painting, Drawing  
• **Assign Final Project.** Unit 3 Project is larger (8-15 images), requires more time and effort and can incorporate the use of any processes from the entire semester – from Pinholes to Tintypes.  
• **Showcase** contemporary photographers working with Digital and Analog Transfer techniques including Inkjet Transfers, Gel Medium Transfers, Xerox Transfers and Polaroid Transfers  
• **Demonstration**: discuss and demonstrate appropriate transfer technique for Inkjet and Xerox Transfers. Spend ~45 minutes utilizing old student material from Unit #2 to create Inkjet & Xerox Transfers.
• **Regroup:** Assignment for Thursday: students must bring in new material for Inkjet & Xerox Transfers – already printed.

**Wednesday:**
- **Discussion:** alternative surfaces for transfer applications – what will / won’t work?
- **OPEN LAB:** Take your prints and create your Inkjet and Xerox prints with them!
- **Critique:** share your transfers, discuss refinements & issues within group

**Week 11:**

**Monday:**
- **Discussion:** further discussion of Gel Medium Transfer and Polaroid Transfer process. Tintype Portraits with Medium Format and Large Format Cameras
- **Showcase** contemporary photographers working with LF and MF cameras to create Tintypes (PhotoBoothSF, Tintypes with Holgas)
- **Demonstration:** discuss and demonstrate appropriate transfer technique for Gel Medium and Polaroid Transfers. Hand out multiple pre-loaded polaroid cameras to half of class while the other half works on Gel Medium Transfers. Using Tintype “Parlor” Kit, showcase appropriate coating method, emulsion storage afterwards, drying plates & cutting for use in 120mm cameras and LF cameras. Show use with studio lighting (demonstrate studio lighting) and natural light. Demonstrate development process. This is a long demonstration – take notes so you’re prepared for a full lab on Thursday.
- **Regroup:** Assignment for Thursday: students must bring in new material for Gel Medium and Polaroid Transfers – already printed or shot. Check out cameras.
- **Listen to (and discuss) student presentations of Final Project concepts.** Critique, revise, refine.

**Wednesday:**
- **Discussion:** discuss various polaroid options, from medium format polaroid backs to the wide range of Polaroid Cameras – what films are / aren’t being made anymore?
- **OPEN LAB:** Take your prints and photos and create your Gel Medium / Polaroid Transfer prints with them! Pour your plates, set them to dry, check out a camera and shoot in either the Studio or outdoors (weather allowing). Process, critique, refine, repeat.
- **Critique:** share your transfers, discuss refinements & issues within group

**Week 12:**

**Monday:**
- **OPEN Moderated LAB.** No new assignments or demonstrations. Work on your projects on your own with one-on-one assistance in the darkroom.
- **Critique:** Discuss preliminary work on projects, discuss redirection & refinement
- **FINAL PROJECT DUE WEDNESDAY**

**Wednesday:**
- **FINALS DUE.** Hang Finals at venue for show, opening on Friday. **QUIZ.**
- Show, promptly at the beginning of class. Dress to impress, bring a dish to share.
- **Critique:** after show, stay late for group discussion of your work. Present your work, in its final form, to the entire class!

**GRADING BREAKDOWN**

20% 3 long short answer quizzes, worth ~7% of total grade each, on each Process Unit.
30% Participation. Further breakdown includes 10% for demo participation and preparedness, 10% for critique participation and 10% for in-class preparedness.
15% Unit 1 Project. Create, utilizing one or more of the creation methods discussed during this Unit a series of images with a cohesive narrative core, unifying formal elements and effective implementation of the process itself.
15% Unit 2 Project. Same as above but utilizing a different set of processes.
20% Unit 3 Project. Much like the individual projects but comprehensive in scope: chose any of the processes learned throughout the semester and develop a larger set of images (8-15) that have a cohesive narrative core, unifying formal elements and showcase a mastery of the chosen process.

A: 100-90% Well above-average effort, a constant resource for new material, critique and assistance to fellow students. Constantly prepared and always attending class.

B: 89-80% Above average effort, challenges themselves during assignments, provides critique. Regularly on-time and absent with only a few exceptions.

C: 79-70% Average. Does assignment requirements but doesn’t challenge themselves with the material. Provides very limited critique or is tardy / absent.

D: 69-60% Below Average. Does assignments and meets requirements most of the time. Does not participate during lecture, lab or critique and is regularly tardy / absent.

F: Below 59% Failing Grade.

Note: I do not give an incomplete grade.

If you have any additional needs for this class, please do not hesitate to talk with me. Reasonable accommodations will be made for students with disabilities – I will fully work with the Office of Disabilities Services (203 WHIT, 474-5655).

High ethical standards are essential for maintaining credibility. Every course taught in the UAF Department of Journalism seeks to maintain these standards, starting with an emphasis on producing original work. Students using unoriginal work, work from prior classes or work from other classes without permission will receive a failing grade on the assignment and, depending on how severe the infraction, may have the issue dealt with administratively.