Drawing and the Line in Literature and the Visual Arts
Eve Aschheim and Susan Stewart

In this course we will pursue some of the relations between perceiving, describing and knowing in the humanities and art practice. Studying the creation and meaning of the line in visual art, poetry, and a handful of philosophical texts, we will be interested in reversible processes of representation and abstraction as we also consider the mimetic and inventive powers of ekphrasis and art writing.

Students should purchase a sketchbook; all readings are available in Labyrinth Books or on the course web-site via e-reserve.

Readings and Preparation: (each week we also will post additional slides of art works to be considered)

February 7 Origins and Horizons—students should prepare in advance:
Immanuel Kant, “What is Called Orientation in Thinking”
Michael Snow, "La Region Central"
from Pliny the Elder, Natural History, books 33-37
Giotto's gestures, from Moshe Barasch, Giotto and the Language of Gesture
[Tacita Dean, “Banewl” – will be screened at our first session]
recommended: Werner Herzog, "Cave of Forgotten Dreams"

February 14 Outlines and Boundaries
Michel Serres, Malfeasance
Robert Creeley, “Frank Stella: A Way to Go” available at:
http://publishing.cdlib.org/ucpressebooks/view?docId=fr4t1nb2hc&chunk.id=d0e13749&toc.id=d0e3622&amp;brand=eschol
Vik Muniz and others, The Waste Land

February 21 The Shape and Motion of the Poetic Line
Paul Valéry, selections The Art of Poetry
James Longenbach, The Art of the Poetic Line
Rosko and Vander Zee, A Broken Thing: Poets on the Line
review on-line: selections of:
haiku, pantoum and other world forms
selections from John Skelton
John Milton, Preface to Paradise Lost
selections from William Blake
selections from Walt Whitman
selections from H.D.
February 28  **The Sketch/ The Finished, the Unfinished, the Erased and the Invisible**  
Balzac, “The Unknown Masterpiece” (recommended: Jacques Rivette, “La Belle Noiseuse”)
Leonard Barkan, selections from Michelangelo’s Drawing
Georges Bataille, from “The accursed share”
Merleau-Ponty, *The Visible and the Invisible*
William Kentridge, early films

March 6  **Volumes and Value: Shadows, Shading, and Planes**  
Joseph Conrad, “The Shadow Line”
Victor Stoichita, *A Short History of the Shadow*
Michael Baxandall, *Shadows and Enlightenment*, selections
selections from Junichiro Tanizaki, *In Praise of Shadows*
drawings by Georges Seurat, Edwin Dickinson, and Catherine Murphy
selections from Neil Fraistat, ed. *Poems in their Places: "Virgil to Ovid" and "Sidney's Series"

March 13  **Mapping Space/ Coordinates and Adjacency**  
Franco Moretti, “Maps,” in *Graphs, Maps, and Trees*, pp. 35-66
selections from Oleg Grabar, *Persian Miniatures*
George Herbert, “The Altar”
Wallace Stevens, “The Man on the Dump”
Dawn Clements on the panoramic in conversation with Eve Aschheim:  

March 17-24  **Spring Recess**

March 27  **Projective Systems in Space and Time:**  
**Anamorphism/Perspective/Isometric Perspective as Resources for the Imagination**  
selections from White, *The Birth and Rebirth of Pictorial Space*
Leo Steinberg, "Velazquez' Las Meninas," October 19 (1981)
selections from Jurgis Baltrusaitis, *Anamorphic Art*
short film: The Brothers Quay and E.H. Gombrich, "Anamorphism"
examples from Chinese landscape painting: catalog essay from "Mountains and Water," British Museum, February-August, 2005
recommended: Hubert Damisch, *Traité du trait = Tractatus tractus*

April 3 *Walking and Looking: Space/Time intersections*
William Gilpin on the Picturesque and on Picturesque Travel
William Hazlitt on Coleridge and Wordsworth
Rebecca Solnit, “The Shape of a Walk,” from *Wanderlust: A History of Walking*
267-276
Michel de Certeau, selections from *The Practice of Everyday Life*
Wordsworth, “Lines. Written a Few Miles Above Tintern Abbey…”
Frank O’Hara, Lunch poems

April 10 *Clouds, Storms, and Ephemera*
Hubert Damisch, from *The Theory of Clouds/
Gerard Manley Hopkins, passages from the *Journals* on clouds and selected poems
selected poems of John Ashbery
Victor Hugo *Shadows of a Hand*
Francis Alÿs, Tornado videos
Leonardo da Vinci, *Deluge* drawings
Susan Howe, from *That This*
works by Cy Twombly; Giacometti; Matisse; and Gabriel Orozco

April 17 *Genres as Dividing Lines: Still Life, Landscape, Portraiture*
Norman Bryson, from *Looking at the Overlooked*
Yves Bonnefoy, from *The Lure and Truth of Painting*
Cesar Aira, *An Episode in the Life of a Landscape Painter*
Peter Greenaway, *The Draughtsman’s Contract*
Ezra Pound, "The River Merchant's Wife: A Letter" and selections from the *Pisan Cantos*

April 24 *The Beginnings of Abstraction: Nature, Geometry, Sound Poetry and, later, the Grid*
Yves-Alain Bois, *Piet Mondrian*, selections
Hugo Ball, "gadji beri bimba"
Kurt Schwitters, *Ursonate*
Steve McCaffery, "Sound Poetry: A Survey"
John Elderfield: "Grids," *Artforum* 10 (May 1972), pp. 52-59
Rosalind Krauss: "Grids," October 9 (Summer 1979)
Briony Fer, *The Infinite Line* (selections)
Gertrude Stein, “Stanzas in Meditation”
May 1  *The Larger Field; Language, Sculpture, Motion, Performance*
   Jasper Johns, Catenary Systems
   Hart Crane “The Bridge”
   Richard Tuttle, selections
   Eva Hesse, selections
   Ann Hamilton, *Lignum*
   Julie Mehretu, selections
   Robert Duncan, "The Opening of the Field"
   Cai Guo-Qiang, *Odyssey*

May 15—Final portfolios due
   (recommended reading and thinking for this process:
    Gerhard Richter, "Atlas"
    Peter Greenaway, "Le Bruit des Nuages"
   )

**Assignments:**

Each seminar member will put together a portfolio of:

--- Twelve (weekly) exercises in both drawing and poetry
--- and 25-30 pages of analytical writing. These can take the form of:
   1) weekly response papers of approx. 3 pages AND an ambitious final project in one of
      the art forms
   2) several short papers
   3) a long research paper
   4) a research proposal for a project that cannot be completed during the term and for
      which you might want to apply for a grant—see the instructors

Grades will be based on class participation and the quality of engagement in your weekly
assignments and final portfolio.