

Doug Ashford

The Non-Human

Media: All media

Duration: 4 – 16 / 18 – 30 August 2014

Location: Hohensalzburg Fortress

Language: English

What to bring: Laptop, camera, material from your own archives, **tools and materials for working in your preferred medium.**

Requirements: **none**

Maximum number of participants: 20

Co-teacher: [missing]

This course encourages a speculative and nonlinear body of collaborative artistic research and practice that aims to expand definitions of human life, bodies, and politics as experienced by class participants in the class. Key in our work will be designing proposals on that challenge the received expectations and qualities of “humanness” as it is defined by the present. Examples could be: the human that is driven toward a wish for death, the body liberated in combination with machines, the historical figure of the monster, the importance of the animal aspect of humanity hidden from culture, the inflation of humanity in collective imagination as beings outside of moral constraint, the human as a resident of a global city perpetually in revolution, and the critique of normality and sanity as an opportunities for re-generation.

These questions will be addressed through a series of selected readings, class demonstrations and discussions. There will be daily collective meetings in which the individual histories and concerns of each participant can be discussed in depth. More centrally, there will be a series of practical assignments that the instructor will also have to follow through reciprocal participatory set of assignments gleaned from each participant. In other words, we will each propose an alternative to the failures of humanity to each other. The instructor claims no expertise in any aspect of the common dream that occupies the central texts and objects we will examine together, and instead propose that we invent such expertise together.

Doug Ashford, born in Rabat (MA) in 1958, is a teacher, artist and writer based in New York. He is Associate Professor at The Cooper Union for The Advancement of Science and Art where he has taught sculpture, design, and interdisciplinary studies since 1989. Ashford's principle visual practice from 1982 to 1996 was the artist's collective Group Material, which produced over forty exhibitions and public projects internationally. Since 1996 he has continued to produce paintings, essays and collaborative projects that engage sociality in artistic form. His most notable public effort ended in the project *Who Cares* (Creative Time, 2006), a book built from a series of conversations between Ashford and an assembly of other cultural practitioners on public expression, ethics, and beauty.

Exhibitions

2013 *Abstraction as Empathy* (solo), Wilfried Lentz Gallery, Rotterdam (NL). Grazer Kunstverein (solo), Graz (AT). **2012** *Abstract Possible: The Stockholm Synergies*, Tensta Konsthall, Stockholm (SE). *Ruptures: Forms of Public Address*, 41 Cooper Gallery, The Cooper Union, New York. dOCUMENTA 13, Museum Fridericianum and other locations, Kassel (DE). *The Air We Breathe*, SFMOMA, New York. **2011** Sharjah Biennial 10: *A Plot for A Biennial*, Sharjah Arts Foundation and other locations. Sharjah (AE). *Abstract Possible: The Tamayo Take*, Museo Tamayo, Mexico City. **2010** *Abstract Possible: The Trailer*, Malmö Konsthall (SE).

Publications

Krist Gruijthuijsen (Grazer Kunstverein) (Ed.), *Writings and Conversations by Doug Ashford*, Mousse Publishing, Milan 2013.

Doug Ashford, "Sometimes We Say Dreams When We Want to Say Hopes, or Wishes, or Aspirations," in: Johanna Burton, Lynne Cooke, Josiah McElheny (eds.), *Interiors*, Sternberg Press/CCS Bard, Berlin/New York 2012. pp 88-109.

Doug Ashford, "Group Material: Abstraction as the Onset of the Real," in: Maria Lind (ed.), *Performing the Curatorial. Within and Beyond Art*, Sternberg Press, Berlin 2012, pp 46-59.

Julie Ault (ed.), *Show and Tell: A Chronicle of Group Material*, Four Corners Books, London 2010

www.dougashford.info