

# **ARST 2210 [Introductory Photography]**

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**University of Georgia (Athens)**

**Study Abroad Program Cortona, Italy**

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RYAN DAVIS

KAITLYN ASHLEY FELLOWS

ARIANA GIBSON

CAROLINE BROOKS GRIZZLE

JOSHUA JOHNSON

PAOLA LOPEZ-AGUIRRE

MICHAELA OSBORN

EMILY STEVENS

MADELINE UEBELHOR

BEGINNING PHOTOGRAPHY these days can mean offering both analogue and digital processes, using any assortment of cameras—from pinhole to iPhones. Though the medium continues to move toward faster and faster systems of capture, some students still prefer the handmade, slower image.

Since immersion in Italy was our shared experience, seeing as much as possible outside the studio took precedence. After all, we'd all come a long way to find Bernini sculptures, Giotto and Piero della Francesco frescos in some of the oldest Etruscan and Roman villages of Tuscany—not to mention attempting to make the perfect photograph of our beautiful view in Cortona!

While Cortona was “home base,” in three months-time our Saturday excursions took us to Rome, Florence, Sienna, Pisa, Volterra, San Gimignano, Assisi, and Arezzo. In studio, we covered basic processing techniques and optical principles applying concepts of time and place in several short assignments. Minding fine craftsmanship, critiques emphasized editing and sequencing as well as preparing a formal visual presentation and written research paper about an artist's work. Final projects advanced either the presentation emulating an artist's work or a personal travel experience.

As I write, we are preparing for Mostra, an exhibition held in Piazza Vagnotti. Each student will show an image from their semester's work. This small catalog represents the print they'll display, along with their composed, artist statement.

*Susannah Hays*  
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*Cortona, Italy*



RYAN DAVIS *After Mondrian*, 2017 archival pigment print

AFTER MONDRIAN pays homage to the Dutch painter Piet Mondrian. In light of Mondrian's early 20<sup>th</sup> century paintings, my image plays on his abstract style in an architectural, physical sense. Using, in this case, wooden bar stools—in place of thick black lines of paint, my 3D construction considers the surface of the painter's canvas in relation to contemporary objects and their materials.

It is important to discover new ways to create and understand the way we perceive everyday objects around us. By combining traditional and modern techniques that form new innovative subjects, my work sets out to find art historical relationships between surfaces—be it photography, painting or sculpture.



KAITLYN FELLOWS *Triangular Leaves*, 2017 cyanotype

After learning about Anna Atkins, I decided to create cyanotypes in homage to her because of our shared interest in natural forms and my desire to practice an early photographic process. In my drawing class, I was already engaged in making line-drawings of botanical forms around me in Cortona. It was therefore only natural to experiment with *light-drawing* these plant forms as well. Though the process took some time to learn, I became enthralled with laying the specimens out, exposing the contact frame to the sun, and watching their dramatic transformation in a clearing bath. I felt a sense of magic making these sun-prints, which 19<sup>th</sup> century photographers most likely felt as well, when they first captured images onto films or papers.



ARIANA GIBSON-RIVERA *Serenity and Escape*, Cortona, Italy 2017 archival pigment print

SERENITY AND ESCAPE came about after hours of painting, strolling and adventuring along the terraces of Cortona. Since I am a Fashion Merchandising major, I decided I would try my hand in a portrait shoot, translating Tuscany's authentic beauty, found in those terraces. My beautiful muse Emily Stevens agreed to wear some of the lovely clothes we purchased during our odyssey. We composed the images so that they would tie into the hidden jewels we'd discovered in the terraces. Some of the feelings that came with these images are femininity, will, romance, and serenity. My wish was to capture those feelings in the variety of muted colors and textures. I feel this work relates the beauty of woman—qualities Italy is especially known to have appreciated throughout the ages.



CAROLINE BROOKS GRIZZLE *March* Florence, Italy 2017 archival pigment print

I love the idea of photographing different human emotions that are visible as people travel on adventures. I think my photos show a spectrum of joy and peace as reflected in body language—gestures, and compositions I frame. Traveling in Italy has personally brought me joy, fear, and peace. While I have always had a traveler’s soul, to photograph candidly is new for me, something I wished to concentrate on during my stay in Italy. Surprisingly, I have found it easy to photograph people and places in Florence, Rome and Cortona. I see a golden light following my figures on the street. I know some of my subjects, but others are complete strangers.



JOSHUA JOHNSON *Dao of Cortona* (triptych) 2017 archival pigment prints with hand-coloring

DAO OF CORTONA reflects the revelations I experienced during my time living in the Etruscan village of Cortona. The history of this hill town, resting in the Apennine Mountains, is so apparent, it prompted me to evaluate the brevity of my existence relative to Cortona's medieval, ancient past.

Sensing a connection with Chinese mountain scroll paintings, from the Song Dynasty, my photographic process first engaged isolating miniature mountain-scape dwellings, hidden within Cortona's Etruscan walls. By enlarging these "found" vignettes, I enlarged their scale vertically. I then Xeroxed the images, in order to draw line figures with sepia ink. The final image was scanned and printed digitally to a heavy weight matt paper, where I then applied col.

The completed triptych, is a layered, visual metaphor representing the preciousness of human life in comparison to the vastness of nature and time.

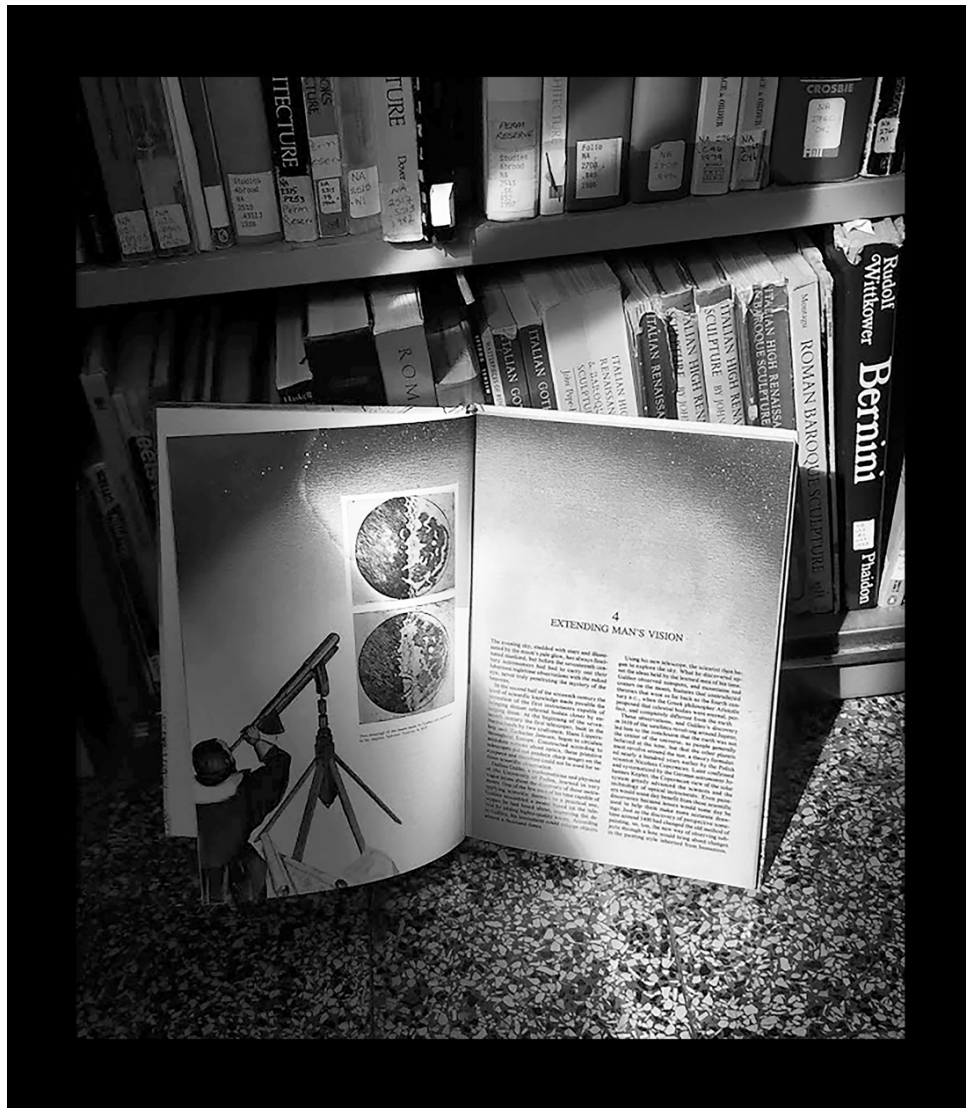


PAOLA LOPEZ-AGUIRRE *Meditations on Memory* archival pigment print Cortona, Italy 2017

In MEDITATIONS ON MEMORY I employed the renaissance construction of a predella. The work includes a central image with three smaller images placed directly below. I chose the predella concept because it allowed me to express ritual prayer, hope and peace, such as you see in Italian churches.

While my predella revisits childhood landscapes and episodes of memories around my exile from Colombia, the altarpiece as a whole is a narrative passage. By surprise, Tuscan landscapes became a new, third-space that called me to mourn the loss of my home and father.





MICHAELA OSBORN *Travel Through Books* archival pigment print 2017

TRAVEL THROUGH BOOKS was inspired by the photographer Abelardo Morell. His photographs of books are done in such a way that the image uses the physical book, as an object, to poetically “tell” the story. Keeping technique simple, these photographs reveal clues to the purpose of literature and the significance of books.

In my photographic series, I worked to capture the story of my journey in Tuscany. I found a book in our school library, which was perfect in both its words and images. I visually looked for its potential to describe how both literature and traveling are intertwined and contribute to my individual growth. In the end, it was discovering how the light in the corner of the room illuminated the book. Light and shadow played as for the sun, as seen through a telescope.



EMILY STEVENS *Nuisance* archival pigment print 2017

Anxiety: noun; a feeling of worry, nervousness, or unease about something—no. An essence; a permanent state. An unease about something, nothing, everything. About what? I'm unsure—typical—but I've thought of every possible and impossible outcome endless times over. I do know one thing though: I'm sorry. For what? I'm unsure. But I guess it is for what I said, or didn't say, or for being that nuisance buzzing around your thoughts. I didn't say hello because I've overstayed my welcome. I'm sorry for that too. My thoughts have broken my heart endless times over; what happened? I'm unsure. Probably nothing, something, everything. Whatever it was is suffocating me. I'm constantly planning for my own self-destruction. I'm okay? I'm unconvinced. The world is spinning me around as everyone stands still. I've lost control of unique thought to a noun. I'm unsure. For that—I'm sorry.

Everyone has his or her glitches: this is mine. This constant feeling of anxiety has become an everyday, and being away from my comforting borders of North Carolina and Georgia has made it just a little more prevalent. But, I have also found comfort in the beauty of Cortona. I have found comfort in the peacefulness, the artistic inspiration, and the amazing people that fill my days. I have found strength in these hills, and I found it was time to confront this noun, "anxiety."



MADLINE UBELHOR *Valley, No. 9* Cortona, Italy 2017 archival pigment print

VALLEY, No. 9 was inspired by Richard Misrach's *Golden Gate Bridge* series where he documents the change of weather and seasons from a single vantage point. In my work, I chose to photograph the varying weather patterns of the Valdichiana Valley in Cortona, Italy. Taken from the hill, in front of the Kehoe Center, varying colors and cloud formations provided a dramatic composition of light and mood. In *Valley No. 9*, a storm is passing over the Valley, with Lake Trasimeno in the far distance.



*Severini Studio Garden: Ari, Paola, Michaela, Kaitlyn, Emily, Caroline, Josh and Ryan (missing from photo, Madeline).*