

**The Art of Horticulture  
Horticulture 2010, Fall 2012**

**We don't learn from experience; we learn from reflecting on experience.**

- John Dewey

**Course website:** <http://www.hort.cornell.edu/art>

**This course meets the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences Literature and the Arts distribution requirement.**

**Instructor:**

Marcia Eames-Sheavly  
169 Plant Science Building  
607-255-1781  
ME14@cornell.edu

**Teaching Assistants:**

Graduate/lead TA: Bryan Emmett, be68  
Carolyn Bradford, cbb53  
Elizabeth Simpson, egs53  
Lourdes Rios, lmr97

**Lecture:** M W, 3:35 – 4:25 p.m.

**Optional Studio:**

Tuesday, 1:25 – 4:25 p.m.  
Horton Lab, Ken Post Labs and Greenhouses  
(Denoted on campus maps as the “green greenhouse.”)

**What This Course Promises You**

This experiential survey course offers a deep exploration into self, the classroom, community, and the world, by engaging with the plant world in a creative context. If you are willing to diligently and intentionally invest your energy in *The Art of Horticulture*, you will learn the value of engaging in the plant world as a way to foster human and community well-being and as an outlet for creativity – an understanding that may serve you for many years to come, indeed, the rest of your life.

Discover the ways in which plants can be used in or as art (e.g. living sculpture, topiary, woven branch, botanical fashions, crop art) and as a subject of art (e.g. botanical illustration, painting, photography). Explore the relationship between plants and art to develop a distinctive lens through which to view the world. Foster keen observation skills and an understanding of the principles of design and presentation in living forms. Requirements include participation in class sessions, reading, reflective writing and creative project work. Materials fee for additional 1-credit studio.

**Learning Outcomes**

Through your deep engagement in Hort 2010 you will...

- **Think about it:** identify, describe and reflect on contemporary perspectives and historical influences in the art and horticulture arena.
- **Look around you:** closely observe the plant world, the garden, nature, and our relationship with all of it. Notice processes in the plant world and learn to perceive them more sensitively: growth and decay, the flow of water, the changes of light and the season, and the numerous ways in which plants can be used to influence, or to be made into, art.

- **Express yourself:** move outside your familiar comfort zone to engage in self-expression, and discover the ways in which creative exploration can positively impact the way you feel.
- **Contribute:** consider how engaging in art and horticulture can make you a better global citizen, and how horticultural art be employed to impact the consciousness of the public.
- **Make it:** figure out the “mechanics” and horticultural challenges required to create a final project, a work of art all your own.

**The 1-credit studio, limited to 25 students offers the additional opportunity to...**

- **Connect with others:** collaborate to produce a variety of art forms for private enjoyment and public display.

There are no prerequisites for this course. No formal art or horticulture experience is necessary. It is expected that students will spend time outside of class writing reflectively, working on original art work, and investigating art-related discoveries of the plant world.

**We do not address gardening.** We also do not delve into most topics with particular depth. This is a survey course that is highly experiential. Any student interested in gaining a deeper understanding of any artist and his/her approach, or furthering an interest in a horticultural technique used to create art, is encouraged to do so through their final project.

**How Will We Fulfill the Course Promise?**

To realize the course promise, you must take responsibility for your own learning, and participate as an active learner. You will reflect considerably on your experience, and the experiences related to those we engage in during the course, through weekly writing. In addition, you will create something highly unique – hopefully, a project that will come to mean a great deal to you.

Our inclusive learning community encourages freedom of expression, reflection, active listening and dialogue, meaningful participation and enhanced understanding. We expect you to actively participate in all class activities, conversations and assignments. ***Ongoing, self-directed and collaborative evaluation is vital to the effectiveness of the course.*** It is expected that everyone will provide constructive feedback to their peers, treating their work with dignity and respect. You are expected to complete the assignments posted in Blackboard prior to their due dates.

See Class Participation Rubric.

Studio: Given that we only meet once each week, **missing more than one class will deplete the experience and will ultimately impact your grade.** In addition, **repeated late arrivals** will also negatively impact your grade for attendance and participation. Please respect the course atmosphere by being timely, and come to class each week.

**Course Resources**

For earth art inspiration, see <http://www.greenmuseum.org>

For additional course resources, to see a gallery of student projects, and for a copy of this syllabus and all handouts, visit the course website, [www.hort.cornell.edu/art](http://www.hort.cornell.edu/art)

To view the Cornell Cybertower on Fine Art and Horticulture, visit <http://www.cybertower.cornell.edu> (a free registration is required).

**How we will evaluate the nature and progress of your learning**

Assignments	Due Dates	Weight as percentage of your grade
Completion of 6 reflective writing assignments.	Bi-weekly, posted in Blackboard	25
Completion of 6 partner/pair reviews of writing, using rubric for reflective writing to guide your commentary.	Bi-weekly, posted in Blackboard	25
Completion of creative project work.	Posted in Blackboard and in Creative Final Project Guidelines.	30
Participation	On-going	20
Total		100

**Reflective Reading and Writing**

**See all reflective writing guidelines.** You are responsible for 6 writing responses and 6 reviews.

Reflective writing will provide the opportunity to:

- Synthesize your learnings, make connections and compare with other experiences.
- Examine and reflect on perspectives influencing contemporary perspectives in the art and horticulture arena.
- Extensively reflect on course experiences and their application to you and your interests.
- Engage in peer review of other students, providing thoughtful and positive commentary.

I will ask your permission to share portions of your reflective writing for presentation or publications. Your identity would remain anonymous, and in addition, excerpts used would be general examples that will not in any way reveal your identity.

**Creative Projects**

You will work on your own on a project of interest. Each of you will follow all guidelines for completion. You may choose from 2 options. Please see **Creative and Botanical Fashion Project Guidelines** for details.

**Supplies**

You will need an artist’s journal, with blank pages, at least 8 x 5 in size, but not larger than 11 x 14. You will bring this to *each class* for writing and creative assignments. Periodically, we may ask to review it.

We will supply most other materials for in-class work, although there will be a few occasions in which we ask you to gather materials to bring to class. You will need to supply materials for your creative project.

### **Office hours**

Tuesdays, in Rm. 169 Plant Science, from 10 – 12; other times by appointment.

**Please silence cell phones and refrain from texting during class. We do not allow the use of laptops.** This is an experiential and reflective class, and cell phone or laptop use is not necessary or appropriate in this venue.

Each student in this course is expected to abide by the ***Cornell University Code of Academic Integrity***. Any work submitted by a student in this course for academic credit will be the student's own work. **The Code of Academic Integrity and Acknowledging the Work of Others** is found in the Policy Notebook for the Cornell Community and also on the web at: <http://www.cornell.edu/UniversityFaculty/docs/main.html>

### **A word about assisting you in a stressful university atmosphere....**

Stress can play havoc on even the most “together” student! Significant stress, mood changes, finding that you're worrying too much, or problems with eating and/or sleeping can interfere with your academic performance, and could be signs that you are not yourself. The source of symptoms might be largely related to your course work; if so, I invite you to speak with me (or your other professors) directly. However, problems with relationships, family worries, loss, or a personal struggle or crisis can also have a big impact in your life, and may require additional professional support.

Here at Cornell, we provide a variety of support resources, including an Academic Advising office in each college, EARS peer counseling, and Gannett's Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS). Each of these resources can help you manage personal challenges that threaten your well-being or ability to thrive at Cornell. Accessing them, especially early on, as symptoms develop, can help support your academic success as a Cornell student.

While I do not need to know the details of what is going on for you, your ability to share some of your situation with me will help me connect you with the appropriate support. I invite you to share with me or our teaching assistants, to the degree you feel comfortable, what may be happening in your life, so that we can help to steer you toward the support you need. In the event that I believe you could benefit from such support, I will express my concerns (and the reasons for them) to you and remind you of our resources.

### **The Course at a Glance**

See separate document for studio activities; studio work will not follow class topics directly, due to factors such as weather and availability of plant materials.

August 22: Course overview.

August 27: Reflective writing and the peer review process.

August 28: Studio

August 29: Earth art & the new earth artists

September 3: A spotlight on the work of Andy Goldsworthy  
Movie: Rivers and Tides

September 4: Studio

September 5: Begin living sculpture topics, with crop art

September 10: Turfgrass and art

September 11: Studio

September 12: We'll meet at the class, then walk over to the new sod sofa location – students lead discussion on the process they followed to create the work of art (rain or shine.)

September 17: Integrating trees and shrubs with art – tree sculpture

September 18: Studio

September 19: Integrating trees and shrubs with art, continued – topiary

September 24: Guest: Eric Howd visits class to address questions about review process  
Bryan Emmett: The woven branch

September 25: Studio

September 26: A spotlight on a bonsai master in our midst

October 1: Floral design

October 2: Studio

October 3: Plant fibers and fiber art  
Carolyn Bradford and Elizabeth Simpson lead class

October 10: Plant dyes  
Carolyn and Elizabeth, continued

October 15: In class, the student-led botanical fashion show

October 16: Studio

October 17: Spotlight on a unique form of woven branch art  
Lourdes Rios

October 22: Introduce botanical illustration

October 23: Studio

October 24: Botanical paintings and illustration in the Johnson Museum  
Class meets at the Johnson Museum

October 29: Botanical paintings in rare books, continued  
Linda Stewart in Mann Library, meet in Mann 160

October 30: Studio

October 31: Art made with gourds

November 5: Garden and nature photography

November 6: Studio

November 7: Technology meets plant art, with digital art, photoscans, time lapse  
Spotlight on Craig Cramer, communications specialist in the Department of Horticulture, locally renowned garden blogger, digital artist

November 12: Mosaics, metal and glass

November 13: Studio

November 14: Spotlight on Durand Van Doren, metal artist (to be confirmed)

November 19: *Is it art?* Tasteful or tacky? Quirky and whimsical art gardens

November 20: Studio

November 26: TBA

November 27: Studio

November 28: End of semester celebration – projected images of student-created projects