

SEEING THROUGH THE BODY

School of the Museum of Fine Arts

Crosscurrents Department

Fall 1995

1 Three Hour Period per week

Faculty: Jo-Anne Green, Diane O'Donoghue and Linda Olstein

The body has always occupied a significant position within the Western tradition of art making. While the human body is currently a source of rich debate in critical literature in the West, it is usually positioned within a lineage of Classical and Christian traditions of representation. This course proposes an expansion of this perspective to include consideration of the visual, textural and spiritual meanings within traditional Indian, Japanese and Jewish culture as a way to expand dialogue around bodies that "matter."

Students will be asked to make art based upon the lectures, readings and classroom discussions. Contemporary critical thinking will be incorporated into all aspects of the course, especially in the notions of "critique" and "aesthetics" that characterize our discussions of student work. We will "use" a model to "be" the body, enabling us to compare the singular material body of classical and Christian traditions, traditions that recognize some bodies and render others invisible, to the fluid meanings of the multiple bodies within the other cultural tradition we will explore ('Darsan', Chi). Through performance we will examine how we can, and do, make meaning with our bodies and gain access to the multiple meanings we already carry within our own bodies.

(BFA students may take this class for Art History credit with permission from the instructors.)