

George Mason University
ARTH 374.002 Art Now
Spring 2015
W 4:30-7:10
Location: Planetary Hall 120
Instructor: Dr. Yookyong Choi
Email: ychoi19@gmu.edu
Office Hours 4:15-4:45 TR and by appointment (Robinson B 373A)

Course Description and Objective:

This course surveys major stylistic developments that have characterized the visual arts from 1945 up to the present time. The class will examine works of individual artists within their social, political, and cultural contexts, and the different theoretical models through which art works have been interpreted. While considering primarily art works produced in American and European culture, this course will also analyze a selection of contemporary art and artistic practices in other regions of the world. Each week we will deal with a set of specific art historical issues and questions while investigating varying strategies and perspectives contemporary artists proposed in their work. Among the critical issues that will be discussed are the concepts of “modernism” and “postmodernism,” the changing roles of the artists, the new materials of art, the roles of art institutions, identity politics, and globalization. By the end of this course, the student should be able to understand and critically analyze major artistic trends and innovations that have marked contemporary art. Course meetings will consist of lectures, discussions based on assigned readings, and student presentations. This course is reading intensive and students are expected to complete assigned readings before each class and to participate actively in discussion.

Required Textbook: Fineberg, Jonathan. *Art Since 1940: Strategies of Being*, 3rd Edition, Prentice Hall, 2011 (available for purchase in the Bookstore, Johnson Center)

Reserved in the Fenwick library: Barnet, Sylvan. *A Short Guide to Writing About Art*. 8th edition. New York: Pearson/Longman, 2005.

Course Requirements:

Students are expected to read the textbooks and assigned articles or book excerpt before each class and to participate actively in discussion. One research paper, an oral presentation, and two exams are required. Further instructions on the papers will be distributed in class. The research paper must be handed in at the beginning of the class on the day on which it is due. Images will be posted on Blackboard.

Participation (10%) and Attendance (5%): The participation grade will consider whether student demonstrates an excellent preparation of the materials by participating actively in class discussion. It will consider whether student raises critical questions about the material, answers questions raised by others and respond to others’ comments in a constructive and thoughtful manner, and offers further discussion questions. Regular attendance is absolutely necessary to do well in this course and there will be a sign-in sheet for each class meeting. You are expected to arrive on time, pay attention, take notes, and come prepared to discuss the assigned readings, as

well as the material presented in class. In addition to the course content, there may also be important announcements and reminders issued in class for which every student will be held responsible whether they were in attendance or not. You are allowed three unexcused absences. 5 points will be taken off for every absence over three. Only legitimate absences with documentation (e.g. physician's note) will be excused.

Paper (20%)

You will write a 6-7-page research paper on a work of art within the geographic and chronological limits of the course. I will hand out specific instructions. Any later papers will be marked off 5 points for each day or partial day late. No paper will be accepted via email. You need to turn in your paper topic (no more than one paragraph) by February 25th.

Oral Presentation (10%)

Students will present the work of art they chose for the research paper. The presentation will be 10-15 minutes long.

Midterm exam (25%) and Final exam (30%)

For the exams, you will be expected to demonstrate knowledge of the major artists, movements, and art historical issues related to the study of contemporary art. You will be tested on the material provided in lectures and the readings. Exams are not cumulative and will consist of a combination of the following: slide identification, term definition, and short essay. I will provide study guides for the exams.

Make-up exams will be given only in the case of a verifiable, documented illness or emergency.

You must contact me via email as soon as possible after the originally scheduled exam.

No extra credit will be given.

Grading Standards:

A: Outstanding work that demonstrates full command of the material covered in lectures and readings. Exhibits excellent understanding, keen insight, original thinking, and critical analysis. Goes beyond basic limits of assignment, persuasive and logical argumentation, and no grammatical errors. A+ 98-100 A 93-97 A- 90-92

B: Demonstrates competent understanding of the material. Adequate grasp of information, logical argument, possibly a few organizational problems or grammatical errors, but shows overall coherence in discussion. B+ 87-89 B 83-86 B- 80-82

C: Demonstrates basic comprehension of the material. Meets basic requirements of the assignment but reveals some problems with factual information and logical argument, and may have grammatical errors. C+ 77-79 C 73-76 C- 70-72

D: Demonstrates minimal comprehension of the material. Shows significant problems with following directions, using resources, organizing logical argument, and using proper grammar. 60-69

F: Exhibits consistent problems with comprehension, organization, and critical thinking. Unacceptable as college-level work. 59 and below

Policies:

You may NOT use personal electronic devices during class time.

Class-specific information will be communicated to students via GMU e-mail and Blackboard.

GMU requires you to activate your GMU e-mail account to receive official campus

communications. If you prefer to use another address, you must activate the e-mail forwarder. I will use GMU addresses exclusively.

Academic Integrity:

GMU operates with an **Honor Code**. It is clearly defined in the catalogue

(<http://www.gmu.edu/mlfacstaff/findex.html>) **Plagiarism** (presenting someone else's ideas or words as your own without proper acknowledgement) violates the Honor Code.

By registering this course, you accept the rules of the Academic Honor Code, and you acknowledge your rights and responsibilities are defined by the Code. Violations of the Academic Honor Code are taken seriously, and disciplinary actions will result should such violations occur.

Disabilities Statement: The Office of Disability Services (ODS)-703-993-2474

<http://ods.gmu.edu>, offers technical and practical support and assistance with accommodations for students with physical, medical, or psychological disabilities. If you have a documented disability and require special accommodations, you must register with the ODS. It is the student's responsibility to present the form to the professor as proof of eligibility for accommodations and discuss with me in advance of each exam concerning specific accommodations.

Important Dates:

February 25	Paper topic due
March 4	Mid-term exam
March 25-April 15	Oral Presentation
April 22	Research paper due
May 6	Final exam

Lecture Schedule:

WEEK 1 (Jan. 21):

Introduction

Abstract Expressionism

Fineberg: 21-44; 57-12

Rosenberg, "The American Action Painters"

Greenberg "Modernist Painting"

WEEK 2 (Jan. 28):

Abstract Expressionism

Rosenblum, "The Abstract Sublime"

Gibson, "Abstract Expressionism: Other Politics"

** Jan. 27 -Last day to drop classes without financial penalty

WEEK 3 (Fe. 4):

Neo-Dada/Nouveau Réalisme, Postwar European Art

Fineberg: 146-153; 167-227

Kaprow, "The Legacy of Jackson Pollock"

Steinberg, "Other Criteria (pp. 82-91)"

WEEK 4 (Feb. 11):

Pop Art

Fineberg: 229-255

Oldenburg, "I am for an Art"; Whiting, "Shopping for Pop (pp.22-30)"

Crow, "Saturday Disasters"

WEEK 5 (Feb. 18):

Minimalism

Fineberg: 281-292

Judd, "Specific Objects"; Morris, "Notes on Sculpture I & II";

Fried, "Art and Objecthood";

Chave, "Minimalism and the Rhetoric of Power"

WEEK 6 (Feb. 25):

Postminimalism, Anti-Form, Earthworks

Fineberg: 296-308; 309-316

Morris, "Anti-Form"; Taylor, "Vessels and Vacancies"

Krauss, "The Double Negative: A New Syntax for Sculpture"; Smithson, "The Spiral Jetty"

Paper topic due in class

Midterm Review

WEEK 7 (Mar. 4):

MIDTERM EXAM

WEEK 8 (Mar. 11):

Spring Break

WEEK 9 (Mar. 18):

Site-specific Art, Conceptual Art

Fineberg: 380-385; 323-343

Crow, "Site-Specific Art: The Strong and the Weak"; Karl, "A Space of Loss: the Vietnam Veterans Memorial"

LeWitt, "Paragraphs on Conceptual Art," "Sentences on Conceptual Art"; Buchloh, "Conceptual Art 1962-1969: From the Aesthetic of Administration to the Critique of Institutions"

WEEK 10 (Mar. 25):

Institutional Critique

Hans Haeckel, "Museums, Managers Consciousness"

Stein, "Sins of Omission"

Oral Presentation I

WEEK 11 (Apr. 1):

Feminist Art

Fineberg: 369-373; 394-5; 461-2

Jones, "The Sexual Politics of the Dinner Party";

Williamson, "A Piece of the Action"; Molesworth, "House Work and Art Work"

Oral Presentation II

WEEK 12 (Apr. 8):

Performance and Video Art

Fineberg: 335-8; 372

Oral Presentation III

WEEK 13 (Apr. 15):

"The Return of Painting", Appropriation Art

Fineberg 373-6, 430-4, 413-8, 430-4

Barthes, "Death of the Author"; Crimp, "The Photographic Activity of Postmodernism";

Jaskot, "Gerhard Richter and Adolf Eichmann"; Jones, "Lost in Translation: Jean- Michel in the (Re)Mix"

Oral Presentation IV

WEEK 14 (Apr. 22):

Art and Identity Politics

Mercer, "Reading Racial Fetishism"; Berger, "Picturing Whiteness: Nikki S. Lee's

Yuppie Project"

Research Paper Due

WEEK 14 (Apr. 29):

Art and Controversy

Becker, "The Brooklyn Controversy: A View from the Bridge"

Art and Globalization

Harris, "Globalization and Contemporary Art: A Convergence of Peoples and Ideas";
Ohlin, "Andrea Gursky and the Contemporary Sublime"

Final Exam Review

Week 15 (May 6)

FINAL EXAM: 4:30-7:15 PM

Note: The schedule and the requirements for this course are subject to change in the event of extenuating circumstances

Bibliography

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