Syllabus

Spring 2015

ARH 4470/5482 Contemporary Art
A Discipline-Specific Global Learning Course\(^1\)

Tuesday and Thursday 2:00-3:15pm
Green Library Room 100B

Instructor: Dr. Alpesh Kantilal Patel
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Office hours: Tuesdays: 4pm-5pm or by appointment

Course description: This course examines major artists, artworks, and movements after World War II; as well as broader visual culture—everything from music videos and print advertisements to propaganda and photojournalism—especially as the difference between ‘art’ and non-art increasingly becomes blurred and the objectivity of aesthetics is called into question.

Movements studied include Abstract Expressionism, Pop, and Minimalism in the 1950s and 1960s; Post-Minimalism/Process Art, and Land art in the late 1960s and 1970s; Pastiche/Appropriation and rise of interest in “identity” in the 1980s; and the emergence of Post-Identity, Relational Art and Internet/New Media art in the 1990s/post-2000 period.

This course will explore the expansion of the art world beyond “Euro-America.” In particular, we will consider the shift from an emphasis on the international to transnational. We will focus not only on artistic production in the US, but also that in Europe, South and East Asia, Africa, and the Middle East.

Emphasis will be placed on examining artworks and broader visual culture through the lens of a variety of different contextual frameworks: formal, authorial, socio-cultural, and identity-based (race, class, gender, and sexuality for instance).

Course structure: In each class, we will often discuss several artworks (produced in the last 10 to 15 years) that will then be genealogically linked to earlier artworks and movements. In other words, we will not move chronologically (itself a framework) but often through other frames (such as exploring minimalism past and present or issues of sexuality now and then).

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\(^1\) This is a discipline-specific global learning course that counts towards your global learning graduation requirement.
Course Objective/ Student Learning Outcomes: To give students a broad survey of art from 1945 to the present and an introduction to the study of visual culture. At course completion, the student will be able to define specialized concepts and terms that are critical to the understanding of contemporary art; and name major developmental periods and movements from 1945 to the present. Overall, the student will gain valuable skills regarding visual analysis that are essential for success in any other art history or visual studies course he or she might take in the future; and will be given the appropriate tools to ‘see’ critically—a skill that will be transferable to careers in medicine and forensic analysis, for instance, and that will allow one to be better equipped in navigating the increasingly complex ways in which images (broadly construed) permeate our lives.

Global Learning Outcomes:
Upon completion of course student will be able to:

--identify the interconnected political, economic, and social power structures that influence the development of contemporary art (Global Awareness);
--construct an analysis of contemporary artworks and broader international and transnational visual culture through a variety of contextual frameworks, e.g. formal, authorial, socio-cultural, and identity-based (race, class, gender, and sexuality) (Global Perspective); and
-- engage with contemporary art found in greater Miami-area museums, galleries, and private art collections to problem solve and explore how the global, and international manifest themselves in or are embedded in the ‘local’ or Miami art scene (Global Engagement).

Readings: There is no textbook for this class.
1. Most readings and viewing assignments are available through links I provide in this syllabus for each week
2. Other readings (marked with double asterisks for easy reference) will be placed in Dropbox.

Please read relevant materials before arriving to class.

Methods of evaluation:
Thirteen (13) assignments: essays, slide id exams, short quizzes, handouts and creative assignments. No extra credit and no make-ups unless a religious holiday or hospitalization (for which documentation is required).

Slide id exams and quizzes will be given on TUESDAYs; and essays, creative assignments, and handouts will be due at the beginning of class on TUESDAYs. See syllabus below for more details.

Available points are as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignments</th>
<th>Maximum Points</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Five (6) Quizzes</td>
<td>60 possible</td>
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<tr>
<td>Two (2) Essays</td>
<td>40 possible</td>
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<tr>
<td>Two (2) Slide ID Exams</td>
<td>20 possible</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two (2) Creative Assignments</td>
<td>60 possible</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Four (4) Handouts</td>
<td>20 possible</td>
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Note: There will be no final exam.
TOTAL POINTS POSSIBLE: 200 possible points

Six Quizzes: 10 points each, 60 points total
Six brief quizzes each worth 10 points will be administered at the beginning of class to assess mastery of information gone over in the previous week. This allows instructor to spend more time on any subject that the majority of the class got incorrect.

Essays: 20 points each, 40 points total
Two essays will be written by the student. One essay measures student’s ability to do a close formal analysis of a work in person; other essay is connected to answers to specific questions regarding a rare catalog the students will be asked to examine. See appendix for detailed information.

Slide ID Exams: 10 points each, 20 points total
Two exams will be administered to assess student’s ability to visually identify artworks. Student must provide artist name, date of work, and title of work for each work shown unless otherwise instructed. Students will be given slides to study approximately 1 1/2 weeks prior to each exam.

Creative Assignments: 50 pts (visual diaries) and 10 pts (psychogeography), 60 pts total
Students create “visual diaries” and a “psychogeography.” Visual diaries includes a textual component. See appendix for detailed instructions.

Handouts: 5 points each, 20 points total
You will receive 5 points for turning in each of four completed handouts that are connected to the readings assigned as well as films viewed. They must be turned in at the beginning of class for credit; and answers must be typed. Emphasis is on attempting to answer question rather than getting correct answers; in class we will go over the answers in depth but having first tackled them on your own is important for retention.

Active Learning Strategies
Though this course is lecture-based, instructor will often lead in-class, group exploration of select artworks and visual culture; and discussions to prompt students to consider more than one viewpoint on a particular issue.

Attendance:
You must attend every class session and arrive to class on time! There are no excused absences or assignments except in the case of hospitalization or a religious holiday, both of which require hard copy documentation. If you are not present when materials are collected for points, you will forfeit those points.

Grading:
94-100%: A; 90-93%: A-; 87-89%: B+; 84-86%: B; 80-83%: B-; 77-79%: C+; 74-76%: C; 70-73%: C-; 67-69%: D+; 64-66%: D; 60-63%: D-; and 0-59%: F.

Classroom policies:
While technology is now a key venue for global interactions of artistic expression (and the tool you will use for most of your preparations for class), embodied human inter
action also remains crucial for understanding the various forms cultural expression tak es. This will be the mode of interaction in class; you must turn off and put away your cell phone and computers upon entering the classroom. Class notes and activities will require paper and pen, so please bring these to each class.

**Academic Misconduct:** Honesty in academia is highly prized, but the temptation to cut corners has gotten even Harvard professors in trouble. It requires a lot of hard work to have integrity—for all of us. In your case, the repercussion for being caught plagiarizing or cheating at a university level can have dire consequences—including a failing grade, expulsion from school, lost tuition and the diminution of your otherwise hard work. If you are having trouble in class or in your personal life, come see me before you make an impulsive self-defeating act.

**SCHEDULE OF CLASSES:**

**WEEK ONE: JAN 7 and 9**
Introduction to course/go over course requirements
How do we organize visual information? Context or Frames

*Context 1: Form: lines, colors, shapes, arrangement/placement, typography;*

*Context 2: Socio-Cultural: very broad category: examples include revolutionary France; Post or Pre-9/11; Hollywood, etc.*

*Context 3: Authorship/Biography: details of author’s life used to reinforce a meaning of a work. For example, artist lives in Miami, but born in Cuba which might explain artist’s interest in Castro; and*

*Context 4: Identity: gender, race, class, sexuality, trans/nationality]*

**WEEK TWO: JAN 14 and 16**
**Quiz #1 of 6: Frames**
Gender: Authorship vs. Representations on Canvas
Painting and Performance: Schneemann/Pollock
Trans-temporal Pop: Blurring High/Low Art

**Readings/Visit Websites:**
http://www.miracosta.edu/home/gfloren/nochlin.htm

Visit websites of artists Lisa Yuskavage, Santiago Sierra, Carolee Schneemann, Jeff Koons, Takashi Murakami, and Andy Warhol:

**WEEK THREE: JAN 21 and 23**  
Essay #1 of 2: Formal Analysis  
Transtemporal Pop (cont.)  
Classic Minimalism: Specific Objects  
**Readings:**


**WEEK FOUR: JAN 28 and 30**  
Turn in Handout #1  
Quiz #2 of 6 on Handout #1  
Go over Fried/Judd/Morris readings  
Oxymoronical/Minimalism  
Maximal Intimacy: Kapoor, Serra, Stingel  
Post-Minimal: Process and Anti-Form: Eva Hesse/Kapoor/etc.


5. Visit Santiago Sierra’s website: http://www.santiago-sierra.com

**WEEK FIVE: FEB 4 and 6**
**History of Biennials**  
**Authorship:** Kapoor/Hesse  
**Contemporary Post-Minimalism**

**WEEK SIX: FEB 11 and FEB 13**  
**Quiz #3 of 6: on Biennials (fulfills global awareness requirement)**  
Visit to Miami Beach Urban Studios (MBUS) Gallery?  
Matthew Barney’s *Cremaster* films??

**WEEK SEVEN: February 18 and 20**  
**Rough draft of Creative Assignment #1 of 2 due: Visual Diary (fulfills global engagement requirement). Not mandatory, but useful.**  
**Gesture/Field:** Willem de Kooning, Franz Kline, Philip Guston/Carroll Dunham, Robert Motherwell versus Rothko, Newman, Reinhardt  

**Post-painterly Abstraction/ Color Field**  

**Gestural painting and Erasure of East Asian influences**  

**Contemporary Color (Field) on the Move: Moving Painting and Painting Movement**  
4. Interview with Anoka Faroquee by Liena Vayzman, “I’d rather be here and now: The performative verb of painting,”  

5. View Stephen Dean’s videos: [https://vimeo.com/stephendean](https://vimeo.com/stephendean)  
   A. *Volta*  
   B. *Grand Prix*:

6. View Jeremy Blake’s videos:  
   A. *Liquid Villa* 15 min, 30 sec (2000):  
   B. *Guccinam*, 14 min, 12 sec (2000):  
   C. *Century 21*, 12 min, 06 sec (2004):  

**WEEK EIGHT: February 25 and 27**  
**Slide ID Exam #1 of 2**  
**Museums & Miami + Contemporary Art**


**Patten & Decoration: 70s/80s and Contemporary**


**WEEK NINE: March 4 and 6**

**Creative Assignment #2 of 2: Psychogeography**

**From Post-Minimal to Earth Body/work: Case Study: Ana Mendieta**

**Gossip/Knowledge**


**Minimalist/Feminist Art Movement: In/Visible Body**

**Moving Away from Ab-Ex**

**(To) Queer Scribbles, Silence, Grids, and Assemblages**

**Reading/Listening Assignments:**

Look at artists’ work on:

1. [http://www.cytwombly.info/twombly_gallery1.htm](http://www.cytwombly.info/twombly_gallery1.htm)
4. ‘Listen’ to John Cage’s 4’ 33’’. Available from: [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hUJagb7hL0E](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hUJagb7hL0E)

Spring Break

WEEK ELEVEN: MARCH 25 and 27
Slide ID Exam #2 of 2
Robert Smithson

Non/Site and Sight: Space as Im/material/ Robert Smithson and Gordon Matta-Clark

Reading:

Film screening: Robert Smithson’s Spiral Jetty

Go to Special Collections to view Magiciens catalog

“Identity” Exhibition History

Readings:
42-51. Focus on Rubin’s response (rather than McEvilley’s response to Rubin) in this particular article.

WEEK TWELVE: April 1 and 3

Turn in Handout #2 of 4
Quiz #4 of 6: on Handout #2

Appropriation: Richard Prince, Cindy Sherman, Barbara Kruger, Sherrie Levine, Jeff Koons, and Robert Longo


5. Richard Prince: Thoughts on Spiritual America


Culture Wars: Then…and Now
Institutional Critique

Readings:


**WEEK THIRTEEN: April 8 and April 10**

*Essay #2 of 2 due (fulfills global perspectives requirement)*

Watch *Paris is Burning* (1990) directed by Jennie Livingston

Readings:


**WEEK FOURTEEN: April 15 and April 17**

*Turn in Handout #3 of 4*

*Quiz #5 of 6: Handout # 3 of 4*

**Relational Aesthetics: Now and Then (Happenings, Fluxus, Situationists)**

Readings:


*Visit:*

5. Solomon R. Guggenheim’s website on its retrospective of Maurizio Cattelan’s work: http://www.guggenheim.org/new-york/exhibitions/past/exhibit/3961


*View:*

7. Hennessy Youngman’s (Jayson Musson) video *Art Thoughtz: Relational Aesthetics*: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7yea4qSJMx4


**WEEK 15**

*Turn in Handout #4 of 4*  
*Quiz #6 of 6: on Handout #4 of 4*

**Pastiche: Blank Parody**  
---Case Studies  
---Pastiche & Institution  

**Visualizing Uncomfortable Racialities: Fred Wilson and Kara Walker**  
No Readings for this section at this time.

**“Post” Identity**  
---De-sexing Warhol  
---Guerrilla Girls  
---Re-reading Mapplethorpe  


5. Look at images and read press release for the 2002 exhibition, *Piss and Sex Paintings and Drawings* at Gagosian Gallery, NYC:

WEEK 16
FINAL Creative Assignment Visual Diaries due (fulfills global engagement requirement)

New Media Art


Syllabus disclaimer: Information contained in this syllabus is, to the best knowledge of this instructor, considered correct and complete when distributed to the student. The instructor reserves the right, acting within policies and procedures of FIU, to make necessary changes in course content or instructional techniques without prior notice.