Syllabus

Spring 2017

ARH 4470/ARH 5482 Contemporary Art
A Discipline-Specific Global Learning Course

Tuesday and Thursday 2-3:15pm
Green Library, Room 165

Instructor: Dr. Alpesh Kantilal Patel
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Director, MFA in Visual Arts
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Office hours: Thursday: 12:45-1:45pm

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’ versus 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, Internet/New Media art, and Post-Internet 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

\footnote{This is a discipline-specific global learning course that counts towards your global learning graduation requirement.}
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).

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, private art collections and beyond; to problem solve and explore how the local, global, and international manifest themselves visually and through written language. (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 on Blackboard.

Please read relevant materials before arriving to class.

Methods of evaluation:
Eighteen (18) assignments: essays, slide id exams, short quizzes, reading responses, in-class discussions, handouts and creative assignments. No extra credit and no make-ups unless a religious holiday or hospitalization (the latter for which documentation is required).

Available points are as follows:

Three (3) Quizzes: 30 possible points
Two (2) 1: Essay +1 Short Answer 35 possible points
Six: (8) 5 In-class discussions + (3)Responses 40 possible points
Two (2) Slide ID Exams: 30 possible points
Two (2) Creative Assignments: 50 possible points
Three (3) Handouts: 15 possible points

Note: There will be no final exam.

TOTAL POINTS POSSIBLE: 200 possible points

A: Quizzes: 10 points each, 30 points total
Three 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 the instructor to spend more time on any subject that the majority of the class got incorrect.

B: Essay/Short answer: 35 points total
Essay measures student’s ability to do a close formal analysis of a work in person. Short answers connected to answers to specific questions regarding a rare exhibition catalog the students will be asked to examine. See appendix for detailed information.

C: In class discussions/Reading Response: 5 points each, 40 points total
Students will break into small groups to discuss readings.

D: Slide ID Exams: 30 points total
Two exams will be administered to assess student’s ability to visually identity artworks and to identity works through authorship. Students will be given slides to study approximately 11/2 weeks prior to each exam.

E: Creative Assignments: 40 pts (visual diaries) and 10 pts (psychogeography), 50 pts total
Students create “visual diaries” and “psychogeography.” Visual diary assignment includes a textual component. See appendix for detailed instructions.

F: Handouts: 5 points each, 15 points total
You will receive 5 points for turning in both of three completed handouts that are connected to the readings assigned as well as films viewed. They must be turned in before the beginning of class for credit. 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 the course is lecture-based, instructors will often lead in-class, group exploration of selected 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 on time. There are no excused absences for assignments except in the case of a religious holiday or hospitalization, 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;
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70-73%: C-; 67-69%: D+; 64-66%: D; 60-63%: D-; and 0-59%: F.

Classroom policies:
Laptops may be used only if you use them to take notes. General courtesy towards your peers and me is expected.

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 10 and 12
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 17 and 19
Quiz #1 of 3: Frames
--visit to Frost Museum
--special presentation by MFA in Visual Arts: Curatorial Practice student Barbara Bollini: Form as Context

Painting and Performance: Schneemann/Pollock

WEEK THREE: Jan 24 and Jan 26
Essay #1 of 2: Formal Analysis upload as well as bring hard copy to class for full credit

Trans-temporal Pop: Blurring High/Low Art
Gender: Authorship vs. Representations on Canvas

Readings:


View artworks of artists Lisa Yuskavage, Carolee Schneemann, Jeff Koons, Takashi Murakami, and Andy Warhol on the following websites:

7. [http://www.jeffkoons.com](http://www.jeffkoons.com)
8. [http://english.kaikaikiki.co.jp/whatskaikaikiki/](http://english.kaikaikiki.co.jp/whatskaikaikiki/)

**Classic Minimalism: Specific Objects**

**Oxymoronical/Minimalism**

Readings:


Visit the website of:
5. Artist Santiago Sierra: [http://www.santiago-sierra.com](http://www.santiago-sierra.com)

WEEK FOUR: Jan 31 and Feb 2
Due Feb 2: Handout #1 of 3 Upload as well as bring hard copy to discuss in class and for full credit
-- presentation by curatorial practice student Meg Kaplan-Noach
-- presentation by curatorial practice student Colette Alhababeh-Mello

In-class discussion #1 on Handout #1 (Fried/Judd/Morris readings)

WEEK FIVE: Feb 7 and 9
Feb 9: Quiz #2 of 3 on Handout #1

Oxymoronical/Minimalism, Part II and III
Post-Post Minimal Art

Gesture/Field: Willem de Kooning, Franz Kline, Philip Guston, Robert Motherwell versus Rothko, Newman, Reinhardt

Wade Guyton’s non-paintings
Readings:
   [http://www.nytimes.com/2012/10/05/arts/design/wade-guyton-at-whitney-museum-of-american-art.html?_r=0](http://www.nytimes.com/2012/10/05/arts/design/wade-guyton-at-whitney-museum-of-american-art.html?_r=0)

WEEK SIX: Feb 14 and 16
Slide ID Exam #1 of 2
Go over creative assignment
Go over Greenberg Reading

Post-painterly Abstraction/ Color Field: Morris Louis, Helen Frankenthaler, and Kenneth Noland
Reading:
Gestural painting and Erasure of East Asian influences

Reading:

Contemporary Color (Field) on the Move: Moving Painting and Painting Movement

Reading:

View:
7. Stephen Dean’s videos
8. Jeremy Blake’s videos:
9. Mario Pfeifer’s video:
   A. *Formal Film in Nine Episodes, Prologue and Epilogue* (2010): [https://vimeo.com/43449040](https://vimeo.com/43449040) [watch only episode approximately starting at time index: 15 minutes, 32 seconds….it’s the one in the ice factory]

**WEEK SEVEN: Feb 21 and 23**
Post-Minimal: Process and Anti-Form: Eva Hesse/Kapoor/etc.

Authorship: Kapoor/Hesse

Readings:


Minimalist/Feminist Art Movement: In/Visible Body

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Thursday: No class; work on assignment due next week

WEEK EIGHT: Feb 28 and Mar 2
DUE Mar 2: Creative Assignment #1 (part a): Local (fulfills global engagement requirement) Upload as well as bring hard copy (can be black and white and lo-res) to class for full credit
Moving Away from Ab-Ex

(To) Queer Scribbles, Silence, Grids, and Assemblages
Readings:

Visit following websites to view artist’s work:

Listen:
4. ‘Listen to John Cage’s 4’ 33”. Available from: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hUJagb7hLOE

Psychogeographies

Pattens/Decoration: 70s/80s and Contemporary
Readings:
3. See my review of Asad Faulwell’s 2011 NY exhibition:
   https://www.academia.edu/3689863/_Asad_Faulwell_at_Kravets_Wehby_ARTFORUM.COM_March_2011

From Post-Minimal to Earth Body/work: Case Study: Ana Mendieta
Gossip/Knowledge
Reading:

WEEK NINE: March 7 and 9
March 7: Slide ID Exam #2 of 2 [20 points]
Due March 9: Creative Assignment #2: Psychogeography [for full credit bring to class to share with everyone and (if yours is digital) upload to Blackboard]

Grading is simple: if you turn it in on-time you get full points; if you do not, you get a zero. In other words, I will not assess the content. This assignment is open-ended, creative, and open to interpretation.

“Identity” Exhibition History

Readings:

WEEK TEN: Spring Break

WEEK ELEVEN: March 21 and 23
Magiciens short answer (fulfills global perspectives requirement)

Film screening: Robert Smithson’s Spiral Jetty
Robert Smithson & Non/Site and Sight: Space as Im/material/ Robert Smithson + Gordon Matta-Clark

Readings:

History of Biennials
Readings:
1. Peruse the following: http://www.biennialfoundation.org
2. **“Biennialology”** in Elena Filipovic et al., The Biennial Reader (Bergen, Norway; Ostfildern, Germany: Bergen Kunsthall; Hatje Cantz, 2010).

View:
Short video of Manifesta 10: http://manifesta.org (in class)

WEEK TWELVE: March 28 and 30
Presentations by MFA in Visual Arts (curatorial practice) candidate Belaxis Buii and MFA in Visual Arts (studio) candidate Jose Garcia

Tuesday: turn in Handout #2 of 3 Upload as well as bring hard copy to discuss in class and for full credit

Tuesday: in-class discussion #2 of handout in groups

Quiz #3 of 3, part 1: on Handout #2 and film & Quiz #3 of 3, part 2: Biennials (fulfills global awareness requirement)

WEEK THIRTEEN: Apr 4 and Apr 6
Presentations by MFA in Visual Arts (studio) candidates Maricel Ruiz and Matt Chernoff

DUE April 4: Creative Assignment #1 (part b): International (fulfills global engagement requirement) Upload as well as bring hard copy (can be black and white and lo-res) to class for full credit
April 6 (before class): Reading responses to case studies (see below)

April 6: In-class discussion #3 of case studies in groups

Politics & Art: From White Cubes to Biennials

Readings:

**Case Study 1: White Cube**

**Case Study 2: Hans Haacke**

**Case Study 3: Manifesta 10**

**Case Study 4: Cuba/Politics**

**Optional** Readings Re: Museums & Miami + Contemporary Art
WEEK FOURTEEN: Apr 11 and 13

April 11: watch Paris is Burning (1990) directed by Jennie Livingston in class

April 13 (before class): Reading responses to Paris is Burning questions

April 13: In-class discussion #4 on Paris is Burning

Readings:


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

Case Studies: Pictures Generation


Case Study 2 Koons, Jeff


Case Study 3 Prince, Richard
**3A. Richard Prince: Thoughts on Spiritual America


Case Study 4 Tuymans, Luc

WEEK FIFTEEN: Apr 18 and 20
Presentations by MFA in Visual Arts (studio) candidates: Samantha Lazarus and Aliette Carolan
DUE April 18: Reading Responses to case studies 1-4

DUE April 20: Creative Assignment #1 (part c): Global (fulfills global engagement requirement) Upload as well as bring hard copy (can be black and white and lo-res) to class for full credit

Culture Wars: Then...and Now
Institutional Critique

Readings:

Visit website for timeline regarding controversy in government funding:

Pastiche: Blank Parody
Case Studies
1. Pastiche & Institution
2. Visualizing Uncomfortable Racialities: Fred Wilson and Kara Walker
no readings for this section at this time.

“Post” Identity
Case Studies
1. De-sexing Warhol
2. Guerrilla Girls
3. Re-reading Mapplethorpe

Readings:
**2. “Introduction” to Thelma Golden’s Freestyle exhibition catalogue

View + Read:

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/396

View(/Listen):
7. Hennessy Youngman’s (Jayson Musson) video Art Thoughtz: Relational Aesthetics: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7yea4qSIJMy4
8. Peter Schjeldahl of the New Yorker’s audio slide show of Maurizo Cattelan’s retrospective, November 21, 2011:

New Media Art

Readings:

Visit:
6. “Collect the World” tumblr (concept and book):
   http://collectheworld.tumblr.com

Exam Week: Apr 27, 12-2pm [note change of time of class; location remains the same]

April 25: (before class) Turn in Handout #3 of 3

April 25: In-class discussion #3 of handout #3 in class

Presentation by MFA in Visual Arts (studio) candidate Paul Padermo

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