

Contemporary Art (HSAR S223)
Yale College Summer Session 2017
Session B: July 4–August 3, 2017
Tues/Thurs, 1–4.15pm

Instructor: Caitlin Woolsey

Email: caitlin.woolsey@yale.edu

Office Hours: Loria 456, Tuesdays and Thursdays 12–1 and by appointment.

Course Description

This seminar surveys art from 1950 to the present, organized around key issues that shaped artistic practice during this period. Students will develop visual analysis skills and we will look closely at a range of media, from painting, sculpture, and photography to video art, performance, and other time-based works. The course covers major artists and movements, primarily in Europe and America, including the legacy of Abstract Expressionism, Pop, Conceptual Art, Minimalism, and Land art. The course will proceed generally chronologically, but the organization, readings, discussion, and assignments will emphasize thematic stakes in order to think carefully about the intersections (and divergences) among different creative practices of the time and contemporaneous social, political, and technological developments. Specific topics include the mediation of perception by technology, concepts of the city, constructions of gender, race, and sexuality, and the global circulation of contemporary images, among others.

The final 75 minutes of each class meeting will be held at the Yale University Art Gallery, Beinecke Rare Book & Manuscript Library, or the Yale Center for British Art, where encounters with relevant works of art serve as a testing ground for the ideas presented in the readings and discussed in seminar. Object-based inquiry at the museums fosters students' confidence in discussing contemporary works of art. For the course readings, art historical accounts and critiques will be supplemented with artists' own writings and art criticism from the period. Through its historical scope and thematic orientation, this course will provide students with a sophisticated understanding of artistic practice in relation to cultural, critical, and sociopolitical developments since the Second World War.

Course Requirements and Assignments

There are no prerequisites for taking this class.

Participation (20%): Attendance is mandatory. Students are expected to come to class having completed all of the assigned reading and prepare to actively engage in discussion, both in the classroom and in the galleries. For each meeting, two students will be assigned to prepare brief, informal comments responding to the assigned readings, in order to help guide class discussion (each student will be responsible for opening class in this manner two times).

Short paper (10%): 4-5 page discussion of an artwork of your choice from the Yale Art Gallery collection, conducting visual analysis and drawing on methods and concepts developed through course readings and discussions. **Due in class Thursday, July 13.**

Midterm examination (30%). The midterm is comprised of two sections: a comparison section, which asks you to compare a number of art works (the specific works will be given to you); and an essay sections, which asks you to discuss a larger theme that has come up in class (you choose which

artworks you wish to discuss, and will be expected to reference course readings). The aim of this course is to equip you to think critically; to that end, there is no slide ID section on the midterm, as is common in art history exams. However, you will be expected to indicate the title, artist, date, and medium of all the artworks you discuss in the exam. **First half of class Thursday, July 20.**

Final paper (40%): 8-10 page research paper on a topic of your choice, related to the course material. Topic to be approved in advance by the instructor. **Due at start of final class, August 3.**

Readings

Required purchase: Hal Foster, Rosalind Krauss, Yve-Alain Bois, Benjamin H.D. Buchloh, and David Joselit, *Art Since 1900: Modernism, Antimodernism, Postmodernism*, third edition, volume 2 (New York: Thames & Hudson, 2016). This book will be available for purchase in the Yale Bookstore, or you may purchase online. Retail Price: c. \$65. ISBN-10: 0500292728 / ISBN-13: 978-0500292723.

All other readings will be posted as PDFs to the Yale Canvas server.

Statement on Academic Integrity

Academic integrity is the foundation of scholarly community. All assigned work must be completed by the student. Disciplinary action will be taken for any instance of plagiarism, cheating, and improper conduct in violation of Yale College policies. Further resources regarding academic integrity can be found at: <http://writing.yalecollege.yale.edu/advice-students/using-sources/understanding-andavoiding-plagiarism>

Course Schedule

July 4—Introduction

Overview of course; discussion of relevant art historical terms and methods; setting the stage for the postwar period. Visit Yale Art Gallery.

Readings: *Art Since 1900*, pp. 15–48; 393–398.

Arthur Danto, “The Artworld,” *The Journal of Philosophy* 61, no. 19 (Oct. 15, 1964): 571-84.

Hal Foster, ed., “Questionnaire on “The Contemporary,”” *October* 130 (Fall 2009). [selections]

July 6—Gesture

“Problems in painting”; off the wall and onto the floor (Jackson Pollock); Abstract Expressionism and Cold War culture. Visit Yale Art Gallery.

Readings: *Art Since 1900*, pp. 404-415; 424–429.

David Joselit, *American Art Since 1945* (London: Thames and Hudson, 2003), pp. 9-32; 56-63.

Rosalind Krauss, “Rauschenberg and the Materialized Image, in *Artforum* (1974).

Jackson Pollock, “Three Texts” (1944, 1947, 1951) in Herschel B. Chipp, *Theories of Modern Art: A Source Book by Artists and Critics* (Berkeley: University of California Press), pp. 546-548.

Barnett Newman, “The Ideographic Picture” (1947) in *Barnett Newman: Selected Writings and Interviews*, ed by John P. O’Neill (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990), pp. 107-108.

July 11—Appropriation

Pop; neo-Pop; the Pictures Generation. Visit Yale Art Gallery.

Readings:

Art Since 1900, pp. 423-428; 483-487; 513-518.

Michel De Certeau, "General introduction" in de Certeau, trans. Steven Rendall, *The Practice of Everyday Life* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984), pp xi – xxiv.

Hal Foster, "Roy Lichtenstein, or the Cliché Image," from *The First Pop Age: Painting and Subjectivity* (Princeton University Press, 2014).

Douglas Crimp, "Pictures," in *October* no. 8 (Spring 1979): 75–88.

July 13—Dematerialization

Conceptual art; relational aesthetics. Visit Yale Art Gallery.

* *Short paper due in class.*

Readings: *Art Since 1900*, pp. 584-603; 614-619.

Sol LeWitt, "Paragraphs on Conceptual Art" (1967).

Lucy R. Lippard and John Chandler, "The Dematerialization of Art" (1968), in Alexander Alberro and Blake Stimson, eds, *Conceptual Art: A Critical Anthology* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1999), pp. 46-50.

Nicolas Bourriaud, "Relational Aesthetics" (1998), in Claire Bishop, ed, *Participation* (London: Whitechapel; Cambridge: MIT Press, 2006), pp. 160-171.

Claire Bishop, "Antagonism and Relational Aesthetics," *October*, no. 110, Fall 2004.

July 18—Everyday Objects

Minimalism; post-minimalism and process art; making objects act (from Fluxus to Beuys). Visit Yale Art Gallery.

Readings: *Art Since 1900*, pp. 494-501; 508-513; 524-529; 536-539.

Michael Fried, "Art and Objecthood" (1967), in *Art and Objecthood* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998), pp. 148-172.

Robert Morris, "Notes on Sculpture, Part 3: Notes and Non Sequiturs" (1967) in *Continuous Project Altered Daily; The Writings of Robert Morris* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1993), pp. 23-39.

Thomas Crow, "Vision and Performance," in *The Rise of the Sixties: American and European Art in the Era of Dissent* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1996), 105-133.

July 20—Feedback

Video art; film; expanded cinema; sound art.

* *Midterm exam during first half of class.*

Readings: *Art Since 1900*, pp. 698-703; 712-723.

Rosalind Krauss, "Video: The Aesthetics of Narcissism," in *October* no. 1 (Spring 1976): 50-64.

Mary Ann Doane, "The Location of the Image: Cinematic Projection and Scale in Modernity," *Ibid*, pp. 151-166.

Andrew Uroskie, "Rhetoric of Expansion," in *Between the Black Box and the White Cube: Expanded Cinema and Postwar Art* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2014).

Seth Kim-Cohen, "At, Out, About," in *In the Blink of An Ear* (London: Continuum, 2004), pp. iii-xxv.

July 25—Environment

Land art; the city as artwork; large-scale site-specific installation. Visit Beinecke Rare Book & Manuscript Library.

Readings: *Art Since 1950*, pp. 542-543.

Robert Smithson, "Entropy and the New Monuments" (1966).

Rosalyn Deutsche, "Tilted Arc and the Uses of Democracy," in *Evictions: Art and Spatial Politics* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1996), pp. 257-268.

Tom Holert, interview with Germano Celant, "Media: Land Art's Multiple Sites," in *Ends of the Earth: Art of the Land to 1974*, ed. Miwon Kwon, Miwon (New York: Prestel, 2012).

Stephanie Rosenthal, "Traces," in *Ana Mendieta: Traces* (London: Hayward Gallery, 2013).

Guy Debord, "Separation Perfected," in *Society of the Spectacle*, trans. Donald Nicholson-Smith (New York: Zone Books, 1994) pp. 11-24.

July 27—Body

Performance; Judson School circle; feminist critique. Visit Beinecke Rare Book & Manuscript Library.

Readings: *Art Since 1900*, 488-493; 502-507; 609-613; 689-693.

Allan Kaprow, "Happenings in the New York Scene" (1961) in Allan Kaprow, *The Blurring of Art and Life*, ed. Jeff Kelley (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993), pp. 15-26.

Carolee Schneeman, "Eye/Body," in Schneeman, *Imaging Her Erotics* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2003), 55-59.

Sally Banes, "The Reinvention of Community," in *Greenwich Village 1963: Avant-Garde Performance and the Effervescent Body* (Durham NC: Duke University Press, 1993), 33-80.

Carrie Lambert-Beatty, "Moving Still: Mediating Yvonne Rainer's *Trio A*," in *October* 89 (Summer 1999): 87-112.

August 1—Performing Identity

Constructing race, gender, sexuality; feminist critique; global cross-pollination and "the other." Visit Yale Art Gallery and Yale Center for British Art.

Readings: *Art Since 1900*, pp. 639-649.

Judith Butler, "Gender is Burning: Questions of Appropriation and Subversion," in Butler, *Bodies That Matter* (New York: Routledge, 1994), 121-140.

Mary Kelly, "No Essential Femininity: In Conversation with Paul Smith," in Kelly, *Imaging Desire* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1996), 66-69.

Mignon Nixon, "Bad Enough Mother," *October*, no. 71 (Winter 1995).

August 3—Collectivity

Social practice; institutional critique; art and politics for the contemporary moment; where do we go from here?

*** Final paper due at the beginning of class.**

Readings: *Art Since 1900*, pp. 637-638, 664-669.

Nato Thompson, "Cultural Production Makes a World," in Thompson, *Seeing Power: Art and Activism in the 21st Century* (New York: Melville House Publishing, 2015), 3-28.

Philippe Dubois, "Trace-Image to Fiction-Image: The Unfolding of Theories of Photography from the '80s to the Present," in *October* 158 (Fall 2016): 155-166.

David Joselit, "Fake News, Art, and Cognitive Justice," in *October* 159 (Winter 2017): 15-28.

