

Art Since 1945

HSAR S223

2022 Yale Summer Session A (In-Person Course)
May 30–July 1
Tuesdays and Thursdays, 1–4:15 PM EST

Instructor: Andrew Vielkind
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Office Hours: By appointment



(Ai Weiwei, *Dropping a Han Dynasty Urn*, 1995)

Course Description

How did conventional definitions of art change in the wake of the Second World War? How have artists responded to the social upheaval of their time? In what ways has art moved beyond the walls of galleries and museums? This course surveys the major global modern art movements from 1945 to the present. Sessions will explore a wide range of topics, such as abstraction, pop art, minimalism, video installations, performance, conceptualism, land art, appropriation, and institutional critique. The works of prominent artists will be examined within their broader historical, political, and cultural contexts. The readings elucidate the intersections between artistic practice and issues of race, gender, class, and sexuality. Students will be introduced to various methodologies employed by art historians and curators, particularly the close visual analysis of objects. Our discussions will make extensive use of the collections in the Yale University Art Gallery and Beinecke Rare Book & Manuscript Library.

Field Trip

We will devote a considerable amount of class time to viewing art objects in person, especially at the YUAG. If logistics permit, we will take a class field trip to the Museum of Modern Art in New York City. This would ideally occur during the final week of class. We will discuss the precise date and time together as a group.

Attendance

This is an accelerated course in a seminar setting, so attendance is mandatory. Any absences will need to be approved by me in advance. Lateness and unexcused absences will negatively impact your grade. The classroom will be conducive to open discussion of the artworks and texts that we are analyzing, so you are expected to actively participate. I understand that some of you might feel uncomfortable speaking aloud in seminar, so I will offer alternate ways for you to participate, such as brainstorming sessions in small groups.

Grading

Participation and Attendance: 20%
Reading Responses: 10%
Short Analysis Paper #1: 10%
Short Analysis Paper #2: 10%
Group Project and Presentation: 20%
Final Paper: 30%

Papers will be graded according to a letter system (A, A-, B+, etc.). It is important that you submit all of your work on time. Late assignments will be deducted one portion of a letter grade (A to A-, etc.) for each day they are past due.

Assignments

Reading Responses: After you finish the assigned readings for each session, you are required to write a brief (approximately 100-200 words) paragraph and post it to the Canvas discussion forum. You should address particular aspects of the texts that you found intriguing, confusing, or problematic. You are also encouraged to pose any questions that you would like us to consider addressing during seminar. Your response should be posted to Canvas one hour before the beginning of class.

Short Analysis Papers (2-3 pages, double spaced): You will closely analyze an artwork, taking into consideration its materials, style and art historical context. The paper should communicate your observations and explain how the work relates to some of the topics we have discussed in class. **The first assignment is due June 10 and the second is due on June 17.**

Group Exhibition Project: The class will collaborate on curating a virtual art exhibition that focuses upon a specific theme. You will select a work of art to include in the show, write short catalogue entry (about 3-4 pages), and give a brief presentation (5 minutes). **Due June 23.**

Final Paper (8-10 pages, double spaced): You will write a thesis-driven essay that demonstrates your ability to closely analyze a work and conduct art historical research. You are expected to develop your argument in consultation with me. You are encouraged to revise and expand upon at least one of your shorter papers based upon the feedback you receive from me. **Due June 30.**

Writing

We will devote time each week to discussing writing skills and effective communication strategies. As a whole, this course invites you to look closely at artworks, so you will be trained on how to employ descriptive language in your written assignments. Over the course of five weeks, you will become versed in the essential art historical vocabulary that will enable you to account for an artwork's mood, style, and technique.

The course will also provide several tutorials on constructing thesis statements and cogent arguments. The goal of your final paper, especially, is to argue incisively and support your claims with ample amounts of evidence.

For your final 8–10-page paper, you will have the opportunity to revise and expand upon a shorter essay based on the feedback that you receive. After you submit each essay, you will receive detailed comments and suggestions on ways to further develop the paper. You should consider the final essay to be the culmination of the written work from previous weeks. This will be an opportunity for you to put the feedback into practice.

Academic Integrity

Yale stresses the importance of academic integrity and strictly penalizes those students who cheat or plagiarize. If you are unsure of how to properly credit another scholar, do not hesitate to approach me with any questions. More information on Yale's academic policies and proper means of citing sources can be found at:

<<https://poorvucenter.yale.edu/writing/using-sources/understanding-and-avoiding-plagiarism>>

Students Requiring Accommodations

If you have any specific needs that will require accommodations, please reach out to me in advance so that I can make adjustments in a timely fashion.

Readings

All of the course readings will be uploaded to Canvas as PDF documents. You are not required to purchase any textbooks, but additional materials will be placed on reserve through the Yale Library. The assigned readings for each session vary in length (some are only a page or two) and have been selected to give you historical context and insight into the minds of artists.

Course Schedule

Week 1

Tu 5/31	Introduction: Out of War—An Art World in Transformation
Th 6/2	Action Painting and Fields of Color

Jackson Pollock, "Two Statements," in *Jackson Pollock*, ed. Francis V. O'Connor (New York: The Museum of Modern Art, 1967), 39–40.

Harold Rosenberg, from "The American Action Painters," in *Art in Theory, 1900–2000: An Anthology of Changing Ideas*, eds. Charles Harrison and Paul J. Wood (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2003), 589–592.

Clement Greenberg, "Modernist Painting," in *Art in Theory*, 773–779.

David Joselit, "The Private Gesture in Public: The Art of the New York School," in *American Art Since 1945* (New York: Thames and Hudson, 2003), 9–32.

Week 2

Tu 6/7

Beyond the Surface of the Canvas: Happenings, Combines, and Assemblages

Allan Kaprow, "The Legacy of Jackson Pollock," in *ArtNews* (1958): 24–25, 55–57.

Leo Steinberg, "The Flatbed Picture Plane" (excerpt), in *Other Criteria* (London: 1972), 82–91.

Jonathan Fineberg, *Art Since 1940: Strategies for Being* (New York: Harry Abrams, 1995), 172–196, 206–212.

Ferreira Gullar, "Neo-Concrete Manifesto," in *Journal do Brazil* (1959).

Th 6/9

Pop

Richard Hamilton, "For the Finest Art, Try Pop" in *Gazette*, no. 1 (1961): 42–43.

Claes Oldenburg, "I Am for an Art..." in *Environments, Situations, Spaces* (New York: Martha Jackson Gallery, 1961).

Andy Warhol, "Interview with Gene Swenson," in *Art News* (November 1963).

"1959d," "1960c" and "1964b", *Art Since 1900* (New York: Thames and Hudson, 2016), 488–493, 515–519, 562–567.

Week 3

Tu 6/14 **Minimal and “Eccentric” Objects**

Donald Judd, “Specific Objects” in *Arts Yearbook* 8 (1965): 74–82.

Michael Fried, “Art and Objecthood” in *Artforum* (Summer 1967): 12–23.

Lucy Lippard, “Eccentric Abstraction,” in *Changing: Essays in Art Criticism* (New York: E.P. Dutton & Co., 1971), 98–111.

David Hopkins, “Modernism in Retreat: Minimalist Aesthetics and Beyond,” in *After Modern Art: 1945–2017* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018), 121–147.

Th 6/16 **Concepts, Ideas, and Processes**

Sol LeWitt, “Paragraphs on Conceptual Art” in *Artforum* 5, no. 10 (Summer 1967): 79–83.

Lucy Lippard and John Chandler, “The Dematerialization of Art” in *Changing*, 255–276.

Joseph Kosuth, “Art After Philosophy” (1969) in *Art in Theory*, 852–861.

H.H. Arnason and Elizabeth C. Mansfield, *History of Modern Art*, 7th edition (Boston: Pearson, 2013), 558–566.

Week 4

Tu 6/21 **Performance, Body, and Video Art**

Judy Chicago and Miriam Schapiro, “Female Imagery” in *Womanspace Journal* (1973): 11–17.

Chris Burden, “Statements” (1975) in *Theories and Documents of Contemporary Art*, eds. Kristine Stiles and Peter Selz (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2012), 899–904.

Laura Mulvey, “Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema,” in *Screen* 16, no. 3 (Autumn 1975): 6–18.

H.H. Arnason and Elizabeth C. Mansfield, *History of Modern Art*, 567–586.

Th 6/23

Site Specificity and Institutional Critique

Robert Smithson, "A Sedimentation of the Mind: Earth Projects" in *Artforum* (September 1968): 44–50.

Adrian Piper, "Some Thoughts on the Political Character of This Situation" (1983) in *Institutional Critique: An Anthology of Artists' Writings*, eds. Alexander Alberro and Blake Stimson (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2009), 242–243.

Hans Haacke, "Museums, Managers of Consciousness" in *Art in America* no. 72 (February 1984): 9–17.

H.H. Arnason and Elizabeth C. Mansfield, *History of Modern Art*, 596–610.

Week 5

Tu 6/28

Identity, Activism, and Appropriation

Barbara Kruger, "'Taking' Pictures" in *Appropriation*, ed. David Evans (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2009), 106.

Jeff Koons, "From Full Fathom Five," *Theories and Documents of Contemporary Art*, 380–383.

H.H. Arnason and Elizabeth C. Mansfield, *History of Modern Art*, 658–665, 687–691.

"1986", "1987," and "1993" in *Art Since 1900*, 702–713, 741–746.

Th 6/30

The Global Contemporary

Ai Weiwei, "Making Choices" in *Theories and Documents of Contemporary Art*, 1069–1070.

Cai Guo-Qiang, "Foolish Man and His Mountain," in *Theories and Documents of Contemporary Art*, 789–90

Tim Griffin, "Worlds Apart: Contemporary Art, Globalization, and the Rise of Biennials," in *Contemporary Art: 1989 to the Present*, eds. Alexander Dumbadze and Suzanna Hudson (New York: Wiley, 2013), 7–16.

Tony Godfrey, "National Art or Global Art?" in *The Story of Contemporary Art* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2020).