

Art Since 1945
HSAR S223, Summer 2025

Mitchell Herrmann (he/him)
Email: mitchell.herrmann@yale.edu



Joan Jonas as Organic Honey, 1972.

This course follows the transition from late modernist art after the Second World War to the heterogeneous practices of contemporary art in the 21st century. Attention will be paid to formative artistic movements such as Pop, Minimalism, Conceptualism, Performance, and Institutional Critique— as well as to how marginalized artists continually challenged the hegemony of the mainstream artworld with political activism along the lines of race, gender, sexuality, and class. Throughout, the course will consider global perspectives that emphasize the varied relations of influence and resistance between artists in the Global South and Euro-American institutions.

The course will include visits to the Yale University Art Gallery, where students may select artworks for their own research papers. Other assignments will include visual analysis, a comparative research paper, and an in-class presentation. Alternative proposals for final projects such as exhibition designs are also welcome. Lectures on the history and theory of each topic will prepare students for seminars involving close reading of primary and secondary sources, visual analysis of artworks, and guided discussion.

This course is a lecture / seminar hybrid that meets twice per week. The first half of each meeting will be devoted to an explanatory lecture, and the second half will be taken up by seminar discussion.

Course Times: Tuesdays / Thursday 1pm – 4:15pm
Classroom TBA

Office Hours: TBA

Assignments

Note: Due to the intensive schedule of this course, it is important that students try to attend every session unless prevented by illness or emergency. Each unexcused absence after the first will reduce your grade by a 1/3 mark (ex. from A to A-).

Participation in group discussions and attentive presence at lectures (15%)

Short writing assignment 1: **visual analysis**, 2-3 pages (15%)

***Due July 8.** Employ the methods and vocabulary of close looking to create a visual analysis of an artwork of your choice.*

Short writing assignment 2: **comparative research essay**, 4-5 pages (25%)

***Due July 18.** Compare one of the assigned readings to another scholarly text that you have found addressing a related topic. Conclude with your own thesis on the topic.*

Presentation on an artist or artists' collective. (15%)

Provide a summary of the work and art-historical importance of an artist of your choice, related to that week's topic. Presentations should be 10-15 minutes and include slideshow images.

Research paper, 10-12 pages (30%)

***Due August 1.** A paper based on your own original research, addressing any topic in postwar and contemporary art. Students must have their topic approved by me. If you would like to propose an alternative final project, please speak to me.*

Academic Accommodations

I am committed to ensuring that this course is accessible to all students. I recommend working through Student Accessibility Services to arrange accommodations (<https://sas.yale.edu/>), but please feel free to contact me directly to discuss any aspect of the course. If you use a screen reader and are encountering difficulty with an uploaded PDF, please let me know.

AI Technology

Do not use AI software to generate writing for this course. You may use AI as an interlocutor or search assistant as you develop your own original ideas– but never assume the factual accuracy of any AI output. We will discuss proper use of AI in class.

Academic Integrity

All work produced for this course must be original. Sources need to be cited when quoted, summarized, or otherwise referenced in your research. Please review the Yale College guidelines on academic integrity here: <https://catalog.yale.edu/undergraduate-regulations/regulations/academic-dishonesty/>

Office Hours

I am happy to meet outside of my scheduled office hours via Zoom. Please send me an email to set up an appointment.

All readings are required and are available in the online class portal.

July 1

1. Postwar Modernism and Politics

Okwui Enwezor. "Mappa Mundi: Frank Bowling's Cognitive Abstraction." In *Frank Bowling: Mappa Mundi*, 2018.

Serge Guilbaut. "The New Adventures of the Avant-Garde in America: Greenberg, Pollock, or from Trotskyism to the New Liberalism of the 'Vital Centre.'" *October* 15 (Winter 1980).

July 3

2. Pop Art and Consumer Culture

Thomas Crow. "Saturday Disasters: Trace and Reference in Early Warhol." In *Andy Warhol*, 2001.

Cécile Whiting. "Marisol's Femininities." *RACAR: Canadian Art Review*, Vol. 18, No. 1/2 (1991).

July 8

3. Minimalism

VISUAL ANALYSIS PAPER DUE

Julia Bryan-Wilson. "From Artists to Art Works." In *Art Workers: Radical Practice in the Vietnam War Era*, 2009.

Hal Foster. "The Crux of Minimalism." In *The Return of the Real: The Avant-Garde at the End of the Century*, 1996.

July 10

4. Post-Minimalism

Kellie Jones. "South of Pico: Migration, Art, and Black Los Angeles." In *South of Pico: African American Artists in Los Angeles in the 1960s and 1970s*, 2017.

Rosalind Krauss. "Sculpture in the Expanded Field." In *The Originality of the Avant-Garde and Other Modernist Myths*, 1985 [1979].

July 15

5. Conceptual Art

Luis Camnitzer, et al. and Stephen Bann. "Foreword" and "Introduction." In *Global Conceptualism: Points of Origin, 1950s-1980s*, 1999.

Mary Kelly and Terry Smith. "A Conversation about Conceptual Art, Subjectivity and the Post-Partum Document." In *Conceptual Art: A Critical Anthology*, 1999.

July 17

6. Performance and Video

COMPARATIVE RESEARCH PAPER DUE

Helen Molesworth. "Cleaning Up in the 1970s: The Work of Judy Chicago, Mary Kelly and Mierle Laderman Ukeles." In *Rewriting Conceptual Art*, 1999.

Lorraine O'Grady. "Olympia's Maid: Reclaiming Black Female Subjectivity." In *New Feminist Criticism: Art/Identity/Action*, 1994.

July 22

7. Institutional Critique

Jennifer Gonzalez. "Fred Wilson: Material Museology." In *Subject to Display: Reframing Race in Contemporary Installation Art*, 2008.

Blake Stimson. "What Was Institutional Critique?" In *Institutional Critique: An Anthology of Artists' Writings*, 2009.

July 24

8. Site-Specificity

Huey Copeland. "The Blackness of Things." In *Bound to Appear: Art, Slavery, and the Site of Blackness in Multicultural America*, 2013.

Miwon Kwon. "Unhinging of Site Specificity." *One Place After Another: Site-Specific Art and Locational Identity*, 2002.

July 29

9. Postmodernism and AIDS Activism

Douglas Crimp. "Pictures." *October* 8 (Spring 1979).

Masha Gessen. "The Beautiful Uncertainty of Douglas Crimp."

<https://www.newyorker.com/news/our-columnists/the-beautiful-uncertainty-of-douglas-crimp>
(2019).

July 31

10. Globalization and the Postcolonial

Okwui Enwezor. "The Postcolonial Constellation: Contemporary Art in a State of Permanent Transition." *Research in African Literatures* 34 No. 4 (Winter 2003).

Pamela Lee. "Introduction." In *Forgetting the Art World*, 2012.

FINAL PAPER DUE AUGUST 1