AH308 Art of Two German States
1945-1989

Instructor: Dorothea Schöne
Course Times: Tuesdays, 2pm-3:30pm & 3:45pm-5:15pm
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Course description
The two German states founded at the end of the Second World War pursued highly distinctive policies in regard to the development of the visual arts. Their respective strategies had a decisive impact on the history of modern art, and on the relationship between institutional art production and instances of critique and experiment. Broadly, the GDR as a Communist republic under Russian influence endorsed the aesthetic of "socialist realism," which strongly influenced its public art and monuments. Artists were expected to belong to state-sponsored organizations and to serve the interests of the polity. At the same time, possibilities for dissent and independent innovation did exist, and found expression at pivotal moments in the GDR's lifespan. In West Germany, a capitalist liberal democracy, the picture was apparently very different. But here too, state policy shaped the kind of art thought favorable to the promotion of international (in this case "Western") alliances, and particularly to the strengthening of links with the United States. The styles associated with now-classic "modern art" can be directly attributed to this policy. As well as meeting immediate global and domestic political demands, art policy in the two German states affected the treatment--or encouraged repression--of the "German catastrophe" (the Nazi regime, the war, and the Holocaust) that was their common historical origin. This course examines the divergent policies of the two German states in respect to art-making, display, and promotion, and traces the consequences of policy for the work of individuals and groups. Artists whose careers began in the period under discussion will visit the class to discuss the degree to which German unification changed their practice. Depending on the approval of funding for a large-scale exhibition on postwar German art scheduled for summer 2019, selected essays by students may be published in a accompanying exhibition catalogue.

Requirements
Attendance at ALL classes is expected. More than one absence in the seminar (e. g. one double session) will significantly affect the grade for the course. 
Class Etiquette: If absent, a short notification via email, if possible sent before the beginning of class, is appreciated. Please keep your bathroom breaks to a minimum and note that punctuality is essential. Also note that the use of smartphones and notebooks is not allowed during seminars on campus as well as in other locations. Students are advised to consult the Student Handbook for regulations governing periods of illness or leaves of absence.
Assessment
Students will be evaluated based on their written work, completion of assignments and participation in class discussion. Success in the class will therefore depend on timely completion of written assignments and course readings, as well as thoughtful engagement with those readings in class through asking questions, formulating responses, and participating in discussion.

Assignments & Presentations
Students conduct independent research on the life and work of an artist chosen from a given selection of names. Mid-term evaluation will be based on research reports and completeness of annotated bibliography. Throughout the course, students are ready to report on the progress and results of their research. In addition, each student present on a historical topic or artist group in one of the class sessions. The final essay will be a revised version of the work-in-progress reports, which may eventually be used for publication in an exhibition catalogue.

Policy on Late Submission of Papers
Essays that are up to 24 hours late will be downgraded one full grade (from B+ to C+, for example). Essays that are more than 24 hours late cannot receive a grade of higher than C (see also policy on late submission in the Bard College Berlin Student Handbook).

Grade Breakdown
Listed below is the percentage grade allotted to each essay, and to classroom participation and assignments.
Seminar Grade = Attendance (participation/preparation of texts, occasional responses and presentation(s)/written responses)
Seminar Grade/ Participation in Class: 30%
Presentation in Class: 20%
Artist Biography (Draft Version)/ Research Report/ Bibliography: 30 % - due Oct 26th 2018 (mid-term due date)
Final Essay: 20 % - due Jan 4th 2019

I. September 4th 2018

Introductory session.

1. NS-Dictatorship/ Unconditional Surrender
2. Holocaust and Exiled Artists
3. Division into Four Zones
4. Reeducation/ Reconstruction/ Reintegration

II. September 11th 2018: 1945-1949

a. National Socialism and Art


b. Exile and Emigration


NO CLASS ON SEPTEMBER 18th 2018 (instead Saturday, Oct. 6th)

III. September 25th 2018 – 1950s

a. Ruptures and Continuities


b. Bauhaus and the Cold War


IV. October 02nd 2018 – 1950s

a. Abstraction in West German Art

1. documenta I+II
2. Abstraction as a Global Language
3. The Artistic Trajectory of Abstraction


b. Socialist Realism

1. Formalism Campaign
2. Realism vs. Socialist Realism


V. October 6th 2018

**Visit of Eisenhüttenstadt and Kunstarchiv Beeskow**

1. Collection of Socialist Realist Art from GDR Public Collections
2. GDR Architecture


VI. October 9th 2018 – 1950s/60s

a. Art, Cold War Conflicts & the Public Space


b. Presentations of research results I.
VII. October 16th 2018 – 1960s

a. ZERO – Fluxus – international movements in the 1960s.


b. Presentations of research results II.

VIII. October 23rd 2018 – 1960s

a. Pop Art

Recommended Readings: German Pop, (English Summary) Exh. Cat. ed. by Martina Weinhart, Frankfurt am Main 2014.

b. Presentations of research results III.

FALL BREAK

IX. November 6th 2018

a. Visualizing the Vietnam War


b. Presentations of research results IV.

X. November 13th 2018 – 1970s

a. Terror and Trauma – the RAF


b. Film Screening: Lutz Dammbeck Zeit der Götter (Age of Gods)

XI. November 20th 2018
Film Screening: Gerhard Richter Painting & Discussion
Recommended Reading: tba

XII. November 27th 2018

   a. Photography – the Becher School in the West

   b. Photography – East Germany Photography


XIII. December 4th 2018

Performance art in East Germany in the 1980s

Studio visit Via Lewandowsky


XIV. December 11th 2018

   a. Revisiting German Art of the 20th Century


   b. Final Discussion