AH114 American Art since 1945

Seminar Leader: Dr. Susanne Märtens
Course Times: Friday, 9-12.15 (with offsite visits to museums and galleries outside regular course hours)
Office Hours: tbc
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Course Description

This course will focus on the development of new concepts of art between the late 1950s and the 1990s: Pop Art, Minimal Art Conceptual Art, Land Art, Pictures Generation, Appropriation Art and Institutional Critique, along with the critical discourses they generated. Central aspects of all these movements can be understood as critical reactions to key concepts of an earlier phase of modernism. American art of the post-war era was initially dominated by a clear concept of what art is and what rules it had to follow. Medium specificity, self-referentiality and the avoidance of any kind of illusionism are key terms of late modernist art theory as developed by the influential critic Clement Greenberg in the context of Abstract Expressionist Painting (Jackson Pollock, Barnett Newman, Willem de Kooning). From the 1950s onwards, these ideas were questioned by artists such as Robert Rauschenberg, Andy Warhol or Jasper Johns. In their works, seriality challenges traditional concepts of artistic originality, different artistic media are intermixed or, by incorporating objects from everyday life into art works (ready-made), questions of the relationship between art and reality arise in a completely new way. The theoretical debates such innovations provoked were an important inspiration to subsequent generations. We will trace the development of these new concepts of art, studying the works in museums and collections, and reading texts by, among others, Clement Greenberg, Arthur Danto, Benjamin Buchloh, Rosalind Krauss and Douglas Crimp.
**Week 1**  
01.02. 2019, Friday, 9.00 - 12.15  
**Introduction**  

**Readings:**  

**Week 2**  
08.02.2019, Friday, 9.00 - 12.15  
„How New York stole the idea of Modern Art“: Abstract Expressionism and the Cold War (Jackson Pollock, Robert Motherwell, Mark Rothko, Willem de Kooning, Barnett Newman etc.)  

**Film:**  
Excerpts from Kim Evans, Jackson Pollock, (Documentary, 1987, 52 min)  

**Readings:**  

**Week 3**  
15.02.2019, Friday, 9.00 - 12.15  
Greenbergs „Modernist Painting“ - From „Action Painting“ to „Colour Field“ (Morris Louis, Kenneth Noland, Helen Frankenthaler)  

**Readings:**  

**Week 4**  
22.02.2019, Friday, 9.00 - 12.15  
**Jasper Johns and Frank Stella**  

**Readings:**  

**Week 5**  
01.03.2019, Friday, 9.00 - 12.15
Pop Art etc. – Andy Warhol, Roy Lichtenstein, Claes Oldenburg, Allan Kaprow

Readings:


Week 6
15.03.2019, Friday – 9.00-12.15
Andy Warhol - Films

Week 7
22.03. 2019, Friday, 10.00 - 12.15
Special Session: Meeting Point Hamburger Bahnhof Museum für Gegenwart

Minimalism before and after

Visit of the two exhibitions „Local Histories“ and „The Elephant in the Room“ with works of Lee Bontecou, Frank Stella, Carl Andre, Fred Sandback, Donald Judd, Dan Flavin, Robbert Morris, Bruce Nauman

Readings

Week 8
29.03.2019, Friday, 7.30
Special Session: Meeting Point Berlin Main Station

Trip to the Museum of Modern Art Frankfurt: Cady Noland

Readings:
Michèle Cone, Interview with Cady Noland, Journal of Contemporary Art (www.jca-online.com/noland.html)

Week 9
05.04.2019, Friday, 9.00 - 12.15
Louise Bourgeois, Eva Hesse and the exhibition „Eccentric Abstraction“ in New York in 1964

To watch: Eva Hesse (ICA Boston) (http://www.bing.com/videos/search?q=Eva+Hesse&view=detail&mid=F2E0EB9AE2D563261FF5F2E0EB9AE2D563261FF5F2E0&FORM=VRDGAR)
Louise Bourgeois, Deborah Wye (Moma) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u-vYvqxHejY

Week 10
12.4.2019, Friday, 9.00 - 12.15
Land Art: Robert Smithson, Walter de Maria, Michael Heizer

Film: James Crump, Troublemakers: the story of land art (2015, 72 min)

Readings:

To watch: https://pl.khanacademy.org/humanities/ap-art-history/late-europe-and-americas/modernity-ap/v/smithson-jetty


Week 11
26.04.2019, Friday, 9.00 - 12.15
Conceptual Art: Joseph Kosuth, Sol Le Witt, Adrian Piper

To watch: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VHLs76HLon4

Readings

Week 12
03.05.2019, Friday, 9.00 - 12.15
The Pictures Generation – Roy Brauntuch, Robert Longo, Cindy Sherman, Barbara Kruger, Sherrie Levine etc.

Readings:

**Week 13**
10.05.2019, Friday, 9.00 - 12.15
**Institutional Critique: Daniel Buren, Hans Haacke and Andrea Fraser**

**Reading:**


**To watch:**
Andrea Frazer: Little Frank and his Carp (2001)  
http://ubu.com/film/fraser_frank.html  
http://ubu.com/film/fraser_welcome.html

**Requirements**

**Attendance**

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. Please also make sure you depart early in order to reach the museums and exhibition spaces in time. If absent, a short notification via email, sent before the beginning of class, is expected. Please note that punctuality is essential. Also note that the use of smartphones and notebooks is not allowed during seminars. Students are advised to consult the Student Handbook for regulations governing periods of illness or leaves of absence.

**Assessment**
The course assessment consists of the overall seminar work (one presentation in addition to class participation) and two essays. See also “Grade Breakdown”.

**Presentation**
Each student will be in charge of one oral presentation. For the presentation, students will bring to class one or more pages of written notes with questions and bullet-points intended to introduce the assigned reading and to facilitate the discussion. These notes will be handed to the instructor at the end of the class and will be part of the presentation grade.
Writing Assignments
There are two essays for this course, one mid-term essay (ca. 2000 words) and one longer final essay (ca. 3000 words). A range of prompts will be provided in advance. The mid-term essay is due on 21th October, midnight. The final essay is due on 20th December, midnight. Essays should include footnotes/references, bibliography and a list of illustrations. The structure and draft of your essays can be discussed in individual tutorials.

Policy on Late Submission of Papers
All written work must be submitted electronically and on time. Please note that essays that are up to 24 hours late will be downgraded one full grade (from B+ to C+, for example). Instructors are not obliged to accept essays that are more than 24 hours late. Where an instructor agrees to accept a late essay, it must be submitted within four

Grade Breakdown
Seminar Grade = Attendance (preparation of texts/participation in discussions, presentation)

Seminar Grade: 50% (30% /20%)
Essay 1: 20 %
Essay 2: 30 %