

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:

Excerpts from Clement Greenberg, *Avant-Garde and Kitsch* (1939), in: Clement Greenberg: *Art and Culture. Critical Essays*, Boston 1989, pp. 3-21.

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:

Excerpts from Serge Guilbaut, *How New York stole the idea of Modern Art*, Chicago/London 1983, pp. 1-15, pp. 195-205.

Week 3

15.2.2019, Friday, 9.00 - 12.15

Greenbergs „Modernist Painting“ - From „Action Painting“ to „Colour Field“
(Morris Louis, Kenneth Noland, Helen Frankenthaler)

Readings:

Excerpts from Clement Greenberg, *Modernist Painting* (1960) and Louis and Noland (1960), in Clement Greenberg, *The Collected Essays and Criticism*, ed. By John O'Brian, Chicago/London 1995, Vol. 4, S. 85-93, pp. 94-100.

Excerpts from: Harold Rosenberg, *The American Action Painters*, in: Charles and Wood, *Art in Theory*, 1900-2000, 2016, pp. 589-592.

Week 4

22.02.2019, Friday, 9.00 - 12.15

Jasper Johns and Frank Stella

Readings:

Hal Foster: 1958: Jasper John's *Target with Four Faces* appears in *Art News*, Hal Foster, Rosalind Krauss, Yve-Alain Bois, Benjamin Buchloh, David Joselit (eds), *Art since 1900*, London 2016 (3rd Ed.), pp. 466-472.

Jasper Johns, Interview with David Sylvester (BBC – 10 October 1965), in: Charles Harrison and Paul Wood, *Art in Theory*, 1900-2000, Blackwell Publishing: Malden, Oxford, Carlton 2016 (18th ed), pp. 737-742.

Excerpt from Frank Stella, Talk given at the Pratt Institute, New York, in: Charles and Wood, *Art in Theory*, 1900-2000, 2016, pp. 820-821.

Week 5

01.03.2019, Friday, 9.00 - 12.15

Pop Art etc. – Andy Warhol, Roy Lichtenstein, Claes Oldenburg, Allan Kaprow

Readings:

Excerpts from: Arthur Danto, The Artworld, in: The Journal of Philosophy, Vol. 61, No. 19, (Oct. 15, 1964), pp. 571-584.

Hal Foster, Roy Lichtenstein and Andy Warhol start to use cartoons and advertisements (...): American Pop art is born and Claes Oldenburg opens *The Store*, in: Hal Foster et al. (eds.), *Art since 1900*, London 2016 (3rd Ed.), pp. (eds), pp. 515-513.

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, Robert Morris, Bruce Nauman

Readings

Excerpts from Donald Judd, Specific Objects (1965), in Charles and Wood, *Art in Theory, 1900-2000*, 2016, pp. 824-828.

Hal Foster: Donald Judd publishes „Specific Objects“: Minimalism receives its theorization at the hands of its major practitioners, Judd and Robert Morris, in: Hal Foster et al. (eds.), *Art since 1900*, London 2016 (3rd Ed.), pp. (eds), pp. 668-571.

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)

Lane Relyea, Hi-Yo Silver. Cady Noland's America, in: Art Forum International, January 1993, S. 50-55.

Week 9

05.04.2019, Friday, 9.00 - 12.15

Louise Bourgeois, Eva Hesse and the exhibition „Eccentric Abstraction“ in New York in 1964

Readings:

Cindy Nemser, An Interview with Eva Hesse, in: Artforum, May 1970, pp. 59-63.

To watch: Eva Hesse (ICA Boston)

(<http://www.bing.com/videos/search?q=Eva+Hesse&&view=detail&mid=F2E0EB9AE2D563261FF5F2E0EB9AE2D563261FF5&&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:

Robert Smithson, Cultural Confinement, first publ. in the catalogue of the documenta 5, Kassel 1972, section 17, p.74 (in German), then published in Artforum (October 1972), here taken from Charles and Wood, *Art in Theory, 1900-2000*, 2016, pp.970-71.

Excerpts from Robert Smithson, A Sedimentation of the Mind: Earth Projects, first published in Artforum (New York, September 1968), here taken from Charles and Wood, *Art in Theory, 1900-2000*, 2016, pp. 877-885.

To watch:

<https://pl.khanacademy.org/humanities/ap-art-history/later-europe-and-americas/modernity-ap/v/smithson-jetty>

15.04.2019 – 21.04. 2019 Spring Break

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

Sol Le Witt, Paragraphs on Conceptual Art, first publ. in Artforum, New York, vol. 5, No 10, Summer 1967, pp.79-83, here taken from Charles and Wood, *Art in Theory, 1900-2000*, 2016, pp.846-849.

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:

Douglas Crimp, Pictures (1977), here taken from „Yuval Etgar, The Ends of Collage, New York 2017, pp. 197-209

Sherrie Levine, Statement (1982), Yuval Etgar, The Ends of Collage, New York 2017, p. 2011.

Rosalind Krauss, The Originality of the Avantgarde, in: The Originality of the Avantgarde and Other Modernist Myth, Cambridge, Massachusetts/London 1985, pp. 151-170, in: Hal Foster et al. (eds.), *Art since 1900*, London 2016 (3rd Ed.), pp. 142-146, 198-203.

Week 13

10.05.2019, Friday, 9.00 - 12.15

Institutional Critique: Daniel Buren, Hans Haacke and Andrea Fraser

Reading:

Andrea Frazer, Script for „Museum Highlights: A Gallery Talk, in: October (57), Summer 1991, pp. 104-122.

Benjamin Buchloh: The Guggenheim Museum in New York cancels Hans Haacke's show and suppresses Daniel Buren's contribution to the Sixth Guggenheim International Exhibition (...), in Hal Foster et al. (eds.), *Art since 1900*, London 2016 (3rd Ed.), pp. (eds), pp. 621-624.

To watch:

Andrea Frazer: Little Frank and his Carp (2001)

http://ubu.com/film/fraser_frank.html

Andrea Frazer, Official Welcome (2003)

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 %