

AR 314 Painting as Object

Module: Artists, Genres, Movements / Exhibition Culture and Public Space

Seminar Leader: Prof. Dr. Dorothea von Hantelmann, Dr. Nina Schallenberg
Course Times: Mondays, 14:00 - 17:15 (with offsite visits to museums and galleries outside regular course hours)
Office Hours: Mondays 11:00 - 12:30 (and by appointment)
Email: d.vonhantelmann@berlin.bard.edu

Course description

In art history and in exhibitions paintings are mostly addressed with regard to their visual, formal and representational qualities. Much less attention is drawn to their objecthood, to their qualities as objects. Yet, since 1910 until today, the search for new ways in painting has always been closely linked to ideas of the objectification of painting. What is reflected is the particular significance of materials and color, the shaping of surfaces and the physical-haptic qualities of a painting. These discourses lead to fundamental reconsideration of the relationship that painting has to an outside reality. From the Russian Avantgardes to the present, and along the works of artists such as Lynda Bengalis, Eva Hesse, Jasper Johns, El Lissitzky, David Hammons, Robert Rauschenberg, Kurt Schwitters, Otto Piene and Cy Twombly, this seminar will discuss the meaning of *painting as object*. It is taught in collaboration with Dr. Nina Schallenberg, Curator of the Nationalgalerie at Hamburger Bahnhof, who is preparing an exhibition with the same title, that will open in fall 2021. About half of the sessions will happen on-campus, where we discuss artworks and texts by authors such as Aleksej Gan, Warwara Stepanowa, Clement Greenberg, Michael Fried, Jasper Johns and Monika Wagner. The other half will take place in the offices and storage places of Hamburger Bahnhof, where students will gain insight into the preparation and curation of the exhibition.

Classes take place on campus unless otherwise noted.

Week 1

27.01., Monday, 14:00 - 17:15

Introduction

Reading:

Monika Wagner, *Material* (2001)

Craig G. Staff, Introduction of *Modernist Painting and Materiality* (2011)

Yves-Alain Bois, Painting as Model (1986)

Week 2

ATTENTION: 08.02., Saturday, 15:00 – 18:00

A tour through Hamburger Bahnhof

Week 3

10.02., Monday, 14:00 – 17:10

Constructivist Tendencies (Part I)

Presentations on Ljubow Popowa, Varvara Stepanova, Alexander Rodtschenko

Reading:

David Burliuk, Cubism (Surface-Plane) (1912)

Vladimir Markov, The Principles of Creativity in the Plastic [Visual] Arts: Faktura (1914)

Alexander Rodchenko and Varvara Stepanova, Programme of the First Working Group of Constructivists (1922)

Benjamin H.D. Buchloh, "From Faktura to Factography", in: October, Vol. 30 (Fall 1984), pp. 82-119.

Week 4

17.02., Monday, 14:00 – 17.15

Constructivist Tendencies (Part II)

Presentations on El Lissitzky, Kurt Schwitters, Wladyslaw Strzeminski

Reading:

El Lissitzky, Proun (1920)

Wladyslaw Strzeminski, Statements (1932/1933)

Week 5

24.02., Monday, 14:00 – 17.15

Abstract Expressionism

Presentations on Jackson Pollock, Cy Twombly, Shozo Shimamoto

Readings:

Shozo Shimamoto, Theory of the Curse of the Brush (1957)

Harold Rosenberg, The American Action Painters (1952)

Clement Greenberg, After Abstract Expressionism (1962)

Week 6

02.03., Monday, 14:00 – 17:15 at Hamburger Bahnhof

Material Culture

Presentations on Jasper Johns, Robert Rauschenberg

Readings:

Jasper Johns, Interview mit David Sylvester (1965)
Robert Rauschenberg, Statement (1959)
Richard Wollheim, The Work of Art as Object (1970)

Week 7

09.03. Monday, 14:00 – 17.15, Meeting point tbc

Informel and Zero

Presentations on Jean Dubuffet, Willi Baumeister, Heinz Mack

Readings:

Jean Dubuffet, „Notes for the Well-Lettered“ (1946)
Heinz Mack, „Resting Restlessness“ (1958)

Week 8

30.03., Monday, 14:00 – 17:15 at Hamburger Bahnhof / storage

Minimalism

Presentations on Frank Stella, Donald Judd, Eva Hesse

Readings:

Donald Judd, Specific Objects (1965)
Michael Fried, Art and Objecthood (1967)

Week 9

23.03., Monday, 14:00 – 17:15

Mid-term feedback

Devising an exhibition layout

Week 10

16.03., Monday, 14:00 – 17:15, Meeting point tbc (Hamburger Bahnhof or campus)

Feminist Approaches

Presentations on Lygia Clark, Joan Snyder, Lynda Bengalis

Readings:

Elizabeth Grosz, The Thing (2001)
Lygia Clark, The Death of the Plane (1960)
Joan Snyder, Statements (1969-2004)

Spring break 06.04. – 12.04.

Week 11

13.04. No class (public holiday)

Week 12

ATTENTION: 25.04., Saturday, 11:00 – 14:00 field trip to Alte Nationalgalerie

Week 13

27.04., Monday, 14:00 – 17:15 Hamburger Bahnhof / storage

Presentations on Sergej Jensen, Corinne Wasmuht, Monika Baer, Kerstin Brätsch

Readings:

tbc

Week 14

ATTENTION: 01.05., Friday, field trip to Hamburg, visit of the exhibition: “Now. Jung painting in Germany” at Deichtorhallen (tbc)

<https://www.deichtorhallen.de/en/ausstellung/jetzt-junge-malerei-in-deutschland>

Alternatively:

04.05., Monday, 14:00 – 17:15 wrap-up session on campus.

Requirements

Attendance

Attendance at ALL classes is expected. More than one absence in the seminar (one double session) will significantly affect the grade for the course. 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. On our study trips you should stay with the group at all times (do not wander off and explore the galleries on your own whilst the conversation is still going on). 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 oral presentation in addition to class participation) and two essays. See also “Grade Breakdown”.

Presentation

Each student will be in charge of one presentation of ca. 15 minutes' length. For the presentation, students will prepare one or more pages of written notes with questions and bullet-points intended to introduce an artwork/artist and to facilitate or lead the discussion.

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 13th March, midnight.

The final essay is due on 15th May, 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 weeks of the deadline and cannot receive a grade of higher than C.

Thereafter, the student will receive a failing grade for the assignment.

Grade Breakdown

Seminar Grade = Attendance (oral presentation / participation)

Seminar Grade: 50% (20% / 30%)

Essay 1: 20 %

Essay 2: 30 %