

FA366 Game Changers in 20th and 21st century Art

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Office Hours: Mondays, 11am to 1pm (or by appointment)

The 20th century was not yet out of its teens. What was anyone to make of the porcelain urinal Marcel Duchamp submitted to a New York art exhibition? Fountain, with its signature R Mutt and the date 1917, was photographed and remembered. It became art, and so changed art forever. Every once in a while, artworks transform how we define and talk about art. Through six guiding themes – “Material Culture”, “Participation,” the “Collapse of ‘high’ and ‘low’”, “Gender,” “Postcolonialism” and the “Anthropocene” – we will discuss artworks of the 20th and 21st centuries that have set new standards within these discourses. Among the artists addressed will be Marcel Duchamp, Andy Warhol, Lygia Clark, Georgia O’Keeffe, Ana Mendieta, Robert Smithson, Pierre Huyghe and Arthur Jafa. We want to understand how artworks can represent and simultaneously influence the cultural Zeitgeist and discourse of their time. We also want to comprehend how the iconic status of an artwork can change over time: is Duchamp still, or has he again become, contemporary? Can we look at Duchamp differently when we see him through the lens of Jeff Koons? Or Andy Warhol? What characterizes an “iconic artwork” of today? Our discussions in class will be enriched by readings (authors will include Benjamin H.D. Buchloh, Edouard Glissant and Bruno Latour) and accompanied by field trips to museums and exhibitions in the city of Berlin. Some of these field trips may take place on Saturdays, and changes to the course schedule will be made accordingly.

Requirements

Academic Integrity

Bard College Berlin maintains the highest standards of academic integrity and expects students to adhere to these standards at all times. Instances in which students fail to meet the expected standards of academic integrity will be dealt with under the Code of Student Conduct, Section 14.3 (Academic Misconduct) in the Student Handbook.

Attendance

Attendance at all classes is a crucial part of the education offered by Bard College Berlin. To account for minor circumstances, two absences from twice-per-week courses or the equivalent (e.g. one absence from a once-per-week course) should not affect the participation grade or require documentation.

Bard College Berlin may not offer credit for any course in which a student has missed more than 30% of classes, regardless of the reasons for the absences. The full Bard College Berlin

attendance policy can be found in the Student Handbook, Section 2.8.

Assessment & Assignments

Each student must give one classroom presentation and write two papers.

The mid-term essay (2000 words) is due on March 22, midnight.

The final essay (3000 words) is due on May 15, 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

Essays that are up to 24 hours late can be downgraded up to one full grade (from B+ to C+, for example). Instructors are not obliged to accept essays that are more than 24 hours late.

Where a professor agrees to accept a late assignment, it should be submitted by the new deadline agreed upon by both parties. Thereafter, the student will receive a failing grade for the assignment. Grades and comments will be returned to students in a timely fashion.

Students are also entitled to make an appointment to discuss essay assignments and feedback during instructors' office hours.

Students receive mid- and end-of-semester grades for their seminar work. Students are entitled to make an appointment with an instructor to discuss seminar participation, or may be asked to meet with the instructor at any stage in the semester regarding class progress.

Grade Breakdown

The grade breakdown for this seminar will be as follows:

Final essay (3000 words): 40%

Midterm essay (2000 words): 30%

Participation (including one classroom presentation): 30%

Schedule

Week 1

29/01, Monday, 14 – 17.15

Part I: Introduction

To prepare: Please post a reference to an artwork that you would consider a 'game changer' (or, if that's too big, that you consider really important). Padlet link will be send out before the class.

Part II: Material Culture 1: Marcel Duchamp

Readings:

- Marcel Duchamp, "The Creative Act" (1957)
- Marcel Duchamp, "Apropos of 'Readymades'" (1961)

Week 2

ATTENTION, SPECIAL DATE 10/02, SATURDAY, 15:00-18:00

Visit of the performance “When Your Ideas Become Civic Actions (100 Hours Reading *The Origins of Totalitarianism*)” of the artist and activist Tania Bruguera at Hamburger Bahnhof
<https://www.smb.museum/en/exhibitions/detail/tania-bruguera/>

Week 3

12/02, Monday, 14 – 17.15

Material Culture II: Andy Warhol

Reading/To watch:

- Andy Warhol, Interview with Gene Swenson
- “Andy Warhol: The Diaries” on Netflix
- (Optional: Benjamin Buchloh, Andy Warhol’s One-Dimensional Art, 1956-66)

Week 4

19/02 no class

Week 5

26/02, Monday, 14 – 17.15

Part 1: The Here and Now: Minimal Art (Robert Morris in the early 60s)

Reading:

- Michael Fried, “Art and Objecthood” (1967), in: *Artforum*, Summer 1967.

Part 2: Participation (Robert Morris in the 70s and revisited today)

Week 6

04/03, Monday, 14 – 17.15

Three takes on participation: Lygia Clark, Bruce Nauman, Joseph Beuys

Reading:

- Janet Kraynak, “Bruce Nauman's Environments”, in: *Grey Room*, Winter 2003.

To watch:

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HE87qEUtApI>

Week 7

11/03, Monday, 14 – 17.15

Game changing art institutions: The Fun Palace

Reading:

- Stanley Mathews, “The Fun Palace as Virtual Architecture: Cedric Price and the Practices of Indeterminacy” (2006)

Week 8

18/03, Monday, 14 – 17.15

Part 1: Introducing the feminist perspective: Cindy Sherman

Part 2: The reading and misreading of female artists in the 20th century: Georgia O’Keefe and Ana Mendieta

To prepare, please listen to the podcast:

- Helen Molesworth, Death of an Artist (Spotify)
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- *Spring Break* –

(Week 9: no class – federal holiday)

Week 10

08/04, Monday, 14 – 17.15

The Situated Artwork: Robert Smithson, Pierre Huyghe

Reading:

- Bruno Latour, An Attempt at a "Compositionist Manifesto" (2010)

<http://www.bruno-latour.fr/sites/default/files/120-NLH-finalpdf.pdf>

10/04, Wednesday, 19 – 21.00 (Lecture Hall)

Artist talk Maya Schweizer

Joint event with the classes of Clio Nicastro and Janina Schabig

Week 11

17/04, Monday, 14 – 17.00

Exhibition Visit: Nancy Holt, "Circles of Light"

<https://www.berlinerfestspiele.de/en/gropius-bau/programm/2024/ausstellungen/nancy-holt>

Week 12

22/04, Monday, 14 – 17.15

Kerry James Marshall

Zoom guest: Alchesay Rinaldi Castro (BCB alumni)

Reading:

- "The Marvellously Black Familiars of Kerry James Marshall," in *Kerry James Marshall Contemporary Artists Series*. Phaidon, 2017.

Optional:

- W.E.B DuBois "The Souls of Black Folks"
https://faculty.uml.edu/sgallagher/WEBDuBois-Souls_of_Black_Folk-1-14.pdf
- <https://www.culturetype.com/2016/05/02/the-figure-remains-essentially-black-in-every-circumstance-kerry-james-marshall-previews-his-master-paintings-at-mca-chicago/>

Week 13

29/04, Monday, ATTENTION: 18:00 – 21:00

Harun Farocki, Arthur Jafa

To watch:

<https://vimeo.com/338234578>

<https://www.jsc.art/videos/1-2/>

Week 14

06/05, Monday, 14 – 17.15

Wrap-Up