

AH207 Feminist Art in the 20th and Early 21st Centuries

Seminar Leader: Dr. Christina Landbrecht
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Office Hours: by appointment

Course Description

This seminar introduces the work of female artists in Germany and the US. Starting with artists who were educated around the turn of the century the seminar will trace the development of feminist art throughout the 20th century, ending with artistic positions that are recent figures of the feminist art discourse. Among the names to be discussed are, for example, Georgia O'Keeffe, Lee Krasner, Meret Oppenheim, Louise Bourgeois, Niki de Saint-Phalle, Alice Neel, Judy Chicago, Adrian Piper, Mierle Laderman Ukeles, Lygia Clark, Rosemarie Trockel, Cindy Sherman, Kara Walker, and Beverly Buchanan. Furthermore, a selection of seminal texts by prominent scholars such as Linda Nochlin, Griselda Pollock, and Helen Molesworth will be discussed throughout the course. The main idea of the seminar is to focus on the work of female artists who not only questioned the established art canon but contributed to changing and expanding it. A particular focus will be on themes such as "Body, Sexuality, and the Image of the Woman", "Politics of Race and Gender" and "Care and Maintenance as Artistic Practices". This way we will not only have the chance to get to know a multitude of diverse female artists and artistic practices, but also unravel the intricate connections between critical discourse and the latter. Excursions to museum exhibitions, and a studio visit are planned as well.

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.

Accommodations

Bard College Berlin is committed to inclusion and providing equal access to all students; we uphold and maintain all aspects of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, and the ADA Amendments Act of 2008, and Section 3 of the German Disability Equality Act of April 27, 2002 (Federal Law Gazette I p. 1468). If you have a disability, or think you may have a disability, please contact the Disability Accommodation Coordinator, Atticus Kleen, (accommodations@berlin.bard.edu) to request an official accommodation.

Requests for accommodations should be made as early as possible to ensure adequate time for coordination and planning. Please note that accommodations are not retroactive and may require advance notice to implement.

If you have already been approved for accommodations with the Disability Accommodation Coordinator, please arrange to meet with me outside of class so that we can develop an implementation plan.

Students may face extenuating circumstances related to various personal or external factors, which impact their academic performance. While these circumstances often do not fall within the legal framework of Disability Accommodations, Bard College Berlin is committed to supporting students experiencing such circumstances. A student needing a short extension or a replacement assignment because of an extenuating circumstance is encouraged to make arrangements directly with instructors if possible. If further support is needed, please visit the [Bard College Berlin Accessibility page](#). Questions about this process can be directed to James Harker (j.harker@berlin.bard.edu) or Maria Anderson-Long (m.andersonlong@berlin.bard.edu).

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 October 20, midnight.

The final essay (3000 words) is due on December 21, 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

05/09, Friday, 9 – 12.15, Bard College Berlin

Part I: Introduction

To prepare: Please choose any artwork from the list of female artists mentioned in the Course Description. Take 5 mins to describe the work (please pay attention to details) and tell us what you like about it and why you chose to discuss it.

Part II: The beginnings of Feminist Art History

Reading:

Linda Nochlin, "Why have there been no Women Artists?" (1971)

- In: Linda Nochlin, *Women, Art, and Power and Other Essays*, London: Thames and Hudson 1989, p. 145-178

Week 2

12/09, Friday, 9 – 12.15, Bard College Berlin

Images of Women and Women Artists at the Turn of the Century

Part I: Painting Women

Reading:

Griselda Pollock, "Women as Sign. Psychoanalytic Readings" (1988)

- In: Griselda Pollock, *Vision and Difference. Feminism, Femininity and Histories of Art*, Routledge 1988, p. 120-155

Part II: Impressionism and the Debate around Berthe Morisot's Artistic Practice

Reading:

Tamar Garb, "Berthe Morisot and the Feminizing of Impressionism" (1990)

- In: T.J. Edelstein (ed.), *Perspectives on Morisot*, exhib.cat, New York: Hudson Hills 1990, p. 57-67

Week 3

19/09, Friday, 9 – 12.15, Bard College Berlin

Part I: Georgia O'Keeffe

Reading:

Linda M. Grasso, "Georgia O'Keeffe and Feminism" (2017)

- In: Linda M. Grasso, *Equal under the Sky. Georgia O'Keeffe & Twentieth Century Feminism*, University of New Mexico Press 2017, p. 1-20

Watch this to tune into O'Keeffe's career and practice

- Discussion by biographer Roxana Robinson and O'Keeffe scholar Nancy Scott on the artist's life and work: <https://www.okeeffemuseum.org/a-conversation-with-roxana-robinson-and-nancy-scott/>

Part II: Lee Krasner

Reading:

Eleanor Nairne, "To Breathe and Be Alive" (2019)

- In: Eleanor Nairne (ed.), *Lee Krasner. Living Colour*, exhib.-cat., Thames & Hudson 2019, p. 10-19

Reading (optional):

Gail Levin, "Reflections" (1971)

- In: Eleanor Nairne (ed.), *Lee Krasner. Living Colour*, exhib.-cat., Thames & Hudson 2019, p. 170-183

Week 4

26/09, Friday, 9 – 12.15, Bard College Berlin

Part I: Louise Bourgeois

Reading:

Hilary Robinson, "Gesture" (2006)

- In: Hilary Robinson, *Reading Art, Reading Irigaray. The Politics of Art by Women*, London / New York: Tauris 2006, p. 125-145

Part II: Meret Oppenheim

Reading:

Nicole Schweizer, "'There is no such thing as 'Feminine Art.' Some Thoughts on the Early Feminist Reception of Meret Oppenheim" (2006)

- In: Therese Bhattacharya-Stettler and Dominik Imhof (eds.), *Meret Oppenheim. Retrospective*, exhib. cat., Ostfildern: Hatje Cantz 2007, p. 123-134

Week 5

03/10, Friday

NO CLASS, PUBLIC HOLIDAY IN GERMANY

Week 6

10/10, Friday, 9 – 12.15, Bard College Berlin

Part I: Nikki de Saint Phalle

Reading:

Karoline Sieg, "From Assemblage to Performance. Participation and Staging in Niki de Saint Phalle's Shooting Paintings" (2016)

- In: Ulrich Krempel and Regina Selter (eds.), *I'm a fighter. Images of Women by Niki de Saint Phalle*, Hatje Cantz, p. 103-119

Part II: Ana Mendieta

Reading:

Julia Bryan-Wilson, "Against the Body. Interpreting Ana Mendieta" (2021)

- In: Jen Kennedy, Trista Mallory, Angelique Szymanek (eds.), *Transnational Perspectives on Feminism and Art, 1960-1985*. New York: Routledge 2021, p. 26-38

Listen to (optional, yet highly recommended):

- Helen Molesworth, *The Death of an Artist*, Podcast (Spotify), 2023

Week 7

17/10, Friday, 9 – 12.15, Bard College Berlin

Part I: Alice Neel

Reading:

Patricia Hills, "Alice by Alice" (1983)

- In: Patricia Hills, *Alice Neel*, New York: Harry N. Abrams 1983, p. 11-185 (many illustrations, text only is about 20 pages)

Part II: Lygia Clark

Reading:

Cornelia H. Butler, "Lygia Clark. A space open to time" (2014)

- In: Cornelia Butler / Luis Pérez-Oramas (eds.), *Lygia Clark. The Abandonment of Art, 1948-1988*. New York: MoMA 2014, p. 12-29

PLEASE NOTE: mid-term essay (2000 words) due on October 20, midnight.

24/10, Friday, no class – FALL BREAK

Week 8

31/10, Friday, 9 – 12.15, Bard College Berlin

Mierle Laderman Ukeles and Mary Kelly

Readings:

Helen Molesworth: "House Work and Art Work" (2000)

- In: *October* 92, 2000, p. 71-97

Kimberley Lamm: "Rewriting maternal femininity in Mary Kelly's Post-Partum Document" (2018)

- In: Kimberly Lamm, *Addressing the other woman. Textual correspondences in feminist art and writing*, Manchester University Press 2018, p. 186-231

Reading (optional):

Shannon Jackson, *High Maintenance. The Sanitation Aesthetics of Mierle Laderman Ukeles*

- In: Shannon Jackson, *Social Works. Performing Art, Supporting Publics*. London / New York: Routledge 2011, p. 75-103

Week 9

7/11, Friday, 9 – 12.15, Bard College Berlin

Howardena Pindell and Kara Walker

Readings:

Uri McMillan: "Is this Performance About You? The Art, Activism, and Black Feminist Critique of Howardena Pindell" (2015)

- In: Uri McMillan, *Embodied Avatars. Genealogies of Black Feminist Art and Performance*, New York 2015, p. 153-180

Amber Jamilla Musser: "Queering Sugar. Kara Walker's sugar Sphinx and the Intractability of Black Female Sexuality" (2016)

- In: *Signs* 42 (1), 2016

Week 10

PLEASE NOTE: Seminar on **SATURDAY, 15/11** instead of 14/11 (!!)

Visit of Exhibitions:

Beverly Buchanan at Haus am Waldsee
Jordan Strafer at Fluentum

Week 11

21/11, Friday, 9 – 12.15, Bard College Berlin

Ecofeminism

Readings:

Alona Pardo: "Reweaving the Web of Womanist Ecopolitics" (2023)

- In: Alona Pardo (ed.), *RE Sisters. A Lens on Gender and Ecology*, exhib.-cat, Prestel, 2023, p. 15-24

Becca Voelcker: "Cultivating Hinterland: What Lies Behind Agnes Denes' *Wheatfield?*" (2024)

- In: Pamila Gupta et. Al (eds.), *Planetary Hinterlands. Extraction, Abandonment, and Care*, Palgrave, 2024, p. 51-61

Week 12

28/11, Friday, 9 – 12.15, Bard College Berlin

Cindy Sherman and Isa Genzken

Readings:

Judith Williamson, „A Piece of the Action: Images of Woman in the Photography of Cindy Sherman" (2006)

- In: Johanna Burton (ed.), *Cindy Sherman, October Files* (series), London / Cambridge, Mass: The MIT Press 2006, p. 39-52

Lisa Lee, "Introduction" / "Plastic Allegories" (2017)

- In: Lisa Lee, *Isa Genzken: Sculpture as World Receiver*, Chicago: The University of Chicago Press 2017, p.1-19 and p. 85-108

Week 13

05/12, Friday, 9 – 12.15, Bard College Berlin

Studio Visit

- Sound artist Nicole L'Huillier or installation artist Candice Lin, fellow of the American Academy Berlin (to be confirmed)

Week 14

12/12, Friday, 9 – 12.15, Bard College Berlin

- Final Discussion, no preparation needed

PLEASE NOTE: mid-term essay (2000 words) due on December 21, midnight.