

ART 345 – Contemporary Art
Rhodes College, spring 2012

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Outline

Art 345 is the final course in a three-part sequence designed to trace the development of the visual arts in the West since the eighteenth century. This course addressed art and theory from 1940 to the present. Although the emphasis of the course is on the visual arts, the ideas examined are applicable to courses covering the same chronological period in film studies, history, languages, philosophy, etc.

The objectives of the course are: (1) to enhance student knowledge of the major works, artists, and movements of western art since 1940; (2) to integrate these works of art within the broader social and intellectual history of the period; and (3) to help students develop their skills in visual analysis and historical interpretation. Among the issues we will examine are: the revival of political art in the late 1960s; the differences between modernism and postmodernism; the emergence of feminist strategies in representation; the rejection of the art object, and of the culture industry; the ongoing dialogue between modern art and mass culture; and the emergence of different voices in the art world in the past generation.

This is an intermediate level course with no prerequisites. Art 345 is a combination lecture and discussion course.

N.b., Although we will attempt to adhere as closely as possible to this syllabus, details are subject to change.

Required books:

- Jonathan Fineberg, *Art Since 1940: Strategies of Being*, 3rd edition, Prentice Hall, New York, 2011.
- .pdf readings and hand-outs

Recommended books:

- Sylvan Barnet, *A Short Guide to Writing About Art*, 9th edition. New York: Longman, 2008.

Warning!

The educational material for this course may include illustrations and texts that some may regard as offensive. Such material is germane to subject and is not included with the intention of offending the religious, political, human, or social sensibilities of any person. Please consult me if you have any concerns.

Important dates:

1/16: Martin Luther King Observance (no class)
1/18: Visual analysis due
1/20: Blog 1
1/25: Blog 2
2/22—2/24: No class
2/27: Dérive report due
3/4: Take-home midterm due

3/12—3/16: Spring break
 3/23: Blog 3
 3/26: Blog 4
 4/4: Blog 5
 4/6: Easter break (no class)
 4/18—4/23: PechaKucha presentations
 5/1: Final Exam

Event dates:

Clough Hanson Gallery Lectures, spring 2012

1/19: Mark Hosford, 7pm in Blount
 2/23: Laurel Sucsy, 7pm in Blount

Also (does not count towards the artist lecture assignment but good to attend):

Juried Student show: 4/13—4/14, reception 4/13

Senior Thesis Exhibition: 4/20—4/27.

Memphis College of Art Lectures, spring 2012 (All lectures are 7pm in Callicott Auditorium unless otherwise stated)

Tuesday, February 7: Mel Chin, Conceptual artist

Tuesday, February 14: Jeanine Jablonski, Gallerist / curator

Thursday, February 23, Chris Irick, Jeweler

Thursday, March 1, 12 – 1 pm (location TBD), Bill Stewart, Vamp & Tramp Booksellers, Contemporary Fine Press & Artists' Books

Thursday, March 29, Mitra Abbaspour, Associate Curator of Photography, Museum of Modern Art, New York

Thursday, April 5, Kim Dorland, Painter

Thursday, May 3, Lauren Kalman, Metal artist, sculptor, performance and installation artist

Week 1

1/11, Wednesday – Introduction

1/13, Friday – Fundamentals of Visual Analysis

Assignments Due	Hand-outs	Read: Books	Read: .PDF
			Anne d'Alleva, <i>Look!</i>

Week 2

1/16, Monday – Martin Luther King Observance (no class)

1/18, Wednesday – Art and Power in the 1930s

Assignments Due	Hand-outs	Read: Books	Read: .PDF
Visual analysis due			Hitler, "Opening of the 1937 Exhibition of Degenerate Art" (1937)

1/20, Friday – Methods discussion: Marxism and Social History

Assignments Due	Hand-outs	Read: Books	Read: .PDF
Blog 1: Students A-L post, students M-Z respond			Leon Trotsky, André Breton and Diego Rivera, <i>FIARI Manifesto</i> (1938)
			Karl Marx, "Communist Manifesto" (1848)
			Meyer Schapiro, 'The Nature of Abstract Art' (1937)

Week 3

1/23, Monday – How New York Stole the Idea of Modern Art

Assignments Due	Hand-outs	Read: Books	Read: .PDF
		Fineberg, 21-45	Gottlieb and Rothko, <i>Statement</i>

1/25, Wednesday – Methods discussion: Formalism and style

Assignments Due	Hand-outs	Read: Books	Read: .PDF
Blog 2: Students M-Z post, students A-L respond			Clement Greenberg, 'Modernist Painting' (1960)
			Clement Greenberg, 'Avant-garde and Kitsch' (1939)

1/27, Friday – Dialogue with Europe

Assignments Due	Hand-outs	Read: Books	Read: .PDF
		Fineberg, 49-87	

Week 4

1/30, Monday — Trauma and Memory: Art of the Occupation in Europe

Assignments Due	Hand-outs	Read: Books	Read: .PDF
			Rachel Perry, "Jean Fautrier's <i>Jolies Juives</i> " (2004)

2/1, Wednesday – New European Masters: ‘Other’ Art

Assignments Due	Hand-outs	Read: Books	Read: .PDF
		Fineberg, 125-141	Jean Dubuffet, “Crude Art Preferred to Cultural Art” (1948)
			Michel Tapié, <i>Un art autre</i> (excerpt) (1952)
			André Breton, “The Art of the Insane, the Door to Freedom”

2/3, Friday – New European Masters (cont’d)

Week 5

2/6, Monday – Pollock

Assignments Due	Hand-outs	Read: Books	Read: .PDF
		Fineberg, 89-113	Fred Gross, ‘Mathieu paints a picture’ (2002)

2/8, Wednesday – The Beat Generation

Assignments Due	Hand-outs	Read: Books	Read: .PDF
		Fineberg, 165-178; 194-201-207	Harold Rosenberg, “The American Action Painters” (1952)
			Marcel Duchamp, “The Richard Mutt Case” (1917)

2/10, Friday – Art, Popular Culture, and ‘les sixties’: *Les nouveaux réalistes*

Assignments Due	Hand-outs	Read: Books	Read: .PDF
		Fineberg, 209-227	Pierre Restany, “Constitutive Declaration of New Realism” (1960)
			Kristen Ross, “French Quotidian” (1997)

Week 6

2/13, Monday – Art, Popular Culture, and ‘les sixties’: *Les nouveaux réalistes II*

2/15, Wednesday – British and American Pop

Assignments Due	Hand-outs	Read: Books	Read: .PDF
		Fineberg, 229-264	Richard Hamilton, "Persuading Image" (1960)
			"The Flaccid Art" (1963)
			Claes Oldenburg, "Statement" ("I am for an art") (1962)

2/17, Friday – Andy Warhol

Assignments Due	Hand-outs	Read: Books	Read: .PDF
		Fineberg, 240-248	Andy Warhol, "What is Pop Art?" (1963)

Week 7

2/20, Monday – Art/Revolution/Spectacle: International Situationism

Assignments Due	Hand-outs	Read: Books	Read: .PDF
			Guy Debord, "Theory of the Dérive" (1958)
			Guy DeBord, <i>Society of the Spectacle</i> (1967)

2/23 – 2/25, College Art Association (no class)

Week 8

2/27, Monday – Dérive Reports

2/29, Wednesday – Midterm review

3/1, Friday – Other voices in the 1960s

Assignments Due	Hand-outs	Read: Books	Read: .PDF
			Romare Bearden, "Statements" (1968, 1969)

Week 9

3/4, Monday – Artists and materials

Assignments Due	Hand-outs	Read: Books	Read: .PDF
Take-home midterm due		Fineberg, 281-308	Bruce Glaser, "Questions to Stella and Judd," <i>Artnews</i> 65 (September 1966): 55-61

3/6, Wednesday – Earth Art

Assignments Due	Hand-outs	Read: Books	Read: .PDF
		Fineberg, 309-321; 347-353	Robert Smithson, "The Spiral Jetty" (1972), in <i>The Writings of Robert Smithson</i>

3/8, Friday – Architecture and design

Assignments Due	Hand-outs	Read: Books	Read: .PDF
		Fineberg, 309-321; 347-353	Robert Venturi, Excerpts from <i>Complexity and Contradiction in Architecture</i> (1966)

Week 10

Spring Break

Week 11

3/19, Monday –Art and politics in the 1960s

Assignments Due	Hand-outs	Read: Books	Read: .PDF
		Fineberg, 323-332	Leon Golub, "Trends: The Artist as an Angry Artist," <i>Arts Magazine</i> 41 (April 1967): 48-49
			Lawrence Alloway, "Art," <i>The Nation</i> 211 (19 October 1970): 381-82

3/21, Wednesday – Performance

Assignments Due	Hand-outs	Read: Books	Read: .PDF
		Fineberg, 332-341	Lucy Lippard, "Sexual Politics: Art Style" (1971)

3/23, Friday – Discussion: Colour and/in art

Assignments Due	Hand-outs	Read: Books	Read: .PDF
Blog 3: Students A-L post, students M-Z respond		Fineberg, 499-503	bell hooks, "Facing Difference: The Black Female Body" (1993)
			Kobena Mercer, "Tropes of the Grotesque in the Black Avant-Garde" (2007)

Week 12

3/26, Monday – Postmodernism: Killing the author

Assignments Due	Hand-outs	Read: Books	Read: .PDF
Blog 4: Students M-Z post, students A-L respond		Fineberg, 353-361	"The Originality of the Avant-Garde: A Postmodern Repetition" (1981)
			Foucault, 'What is an author?' (1970)
			Barthes, 'Death of the Author' (1967)
			Walter Benjamin, "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction" (1936)

3/28, Wednesday – Feminism

Assignments Due	Hand-outs	Read: Books	Read: .PDF
		Fineberg, 369-373	Linda Nochlin, "Why have there been no great women artists?" (1971)
			"Gertrude Stein", et.al., "Guerrilla Girls and Guerrilla Girls BroadBand: Inside Story" (2011)

3/30, Friday – Feminism (cont'd)

Week 13

4/2, Monday – The 1970s Return to Painting

Assignments Due	Hand-outs	Read: Books	Read: .PDF
		Fineberg, 373-376; 397-418	

4/4, Wednesday – Discussion: Political and activist art

Assignments Due	Hand-outs	Read: Books	Read: .PDF
Blog 5: Students M-Z post, students A-L respond		Fineberg, 456-463	Hilton Kramer, "Turning Back the Clock: Art and Politics in 1984" (1984)
			Lucy Lippard, "Too Political? Forget it" (1999)

4/6, Friday – Easter break (no class)

Week 14

4/9, Monday – The Abject and the Uncanny

Assignments Due	Hand-outs	Read: Books	Read: .PDF
			Julia Kristeva, " Approaching Abjection " (1982)
			Sigmund Freud, <i>The Uncanny</i> (1919)

4/11, Wednesday – Beauty

Assignments Due	Hand-outs	Read: Books	Read: .PDF
			Dave Hickey, "Enter the Dragon: On the Vernacular of Beauty" (1993)

4/13, Friday – Video and Pornography

Assignments Due	Hand-outs	Read: Books	Read: .PDF

Week 15

4/16, Monday – Street Art and related neo-Pop

Assignments Due	Hand-outs	Read: Books	Read: .PDF
		Fineberg, 504-505	Nicolas Bourriaud, Excerpts from <i>Relational Aesthetics</i> (1998)

4/18, Wednesday – Final PechaKucha presentations

4/20, Friday – Final PechaKucha presentations

Week 16

4/23, Monday – Final PechaKucha presentations

4/25, Wednesday – Overflow day/Review

5/1, Tuesday – Final exam, 5:30pm