

## ART 305 - Contemporary Art History

“Art is a human activity, consisting in this, that one man consciously, by means of certain external signs, hands on to others feelings he has lived through, and that other people are infected by these feelings, and also experience them.” –Leo Tolstoy

Instructor: Monica Jovanovich  
M/W 6pm – 7:20pm  
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This course will highlight important movements and critical ideas of American and European art from the end of World War II through to the present paying close attention to social, cultural, and political contexts. We will examine the unique character and experience of modern life and, through visual analysis, this course will address issues such as gender, urbanism, culture, the middle class, alienation, and post-modernism, present in the various movements.

It is expected that students attend all lectures (as information will be presented that is not in the texts), take thorough notes, participate in class discussions, and complete the required readings listed in the syllabus. It is imperative that you stay current with the reading as the class will be moving very quickly. Students will need to complete two exams (midterm and final) and a take home essay. There will be a handout listing required images, artists, and key terms, as well as a website containing the required exam images. Please use these resources along with your lecture notes and texts to study for the exams as you will need to be able to identify the image and artist and communicate its medium, style, and broader contextual function and relevance within the history of art. In addition, students must know the general characteristics of each movement. If a class is missed, the student must make up that information.

### **TEXTS:**

All chapter readings refer to Jonathan Fineberg’s Art Since 1940: Strategies of Being, 2000 (Second edition). A copy is also on reserve in the library.

### **Recommended texts include:**

Theories and Documents of Contemporary Art: A Sourcebook of Artists’ Writings, Eds. Kristine Stiles & Peter Selz.

Art in Theory: 1900-2000 An Anthology of Changing Ideas, Eds. Charles Harrison & Paul Wood.

## SCHEDULE

Please note, changes may be made to the schedule if necessary and will be announced at the beginning of class

### Week One

1/12 & 1/14

Introduction to the class & art movements from 1900-WWII

### Week Two

1/19: NO CLASS

1/21: Chapter 2 - New York in the Forties

### Week Three

1/26 & 1/28

Chapter 3 – A Dialog with Europe

### Week Four

2/2 & 2/4

Chapter 4 – Existentialism Comes to the Fore

### Week Five

2/9 & 2/11

Chapter 5 – The New European Masters of the Late Forties

### Week Six

2/16: NO CLASS

2/18: Chapter 6 – Some International Tendencies of the Fifties

ARTICLE: Clement Greenberg “Modernist Painting” 1965

### Week Seven

2/23: Chapter 7 – The Beat Generation: The Fifties in America

ARTICLE: Allan Kaprow “Assemblages, Environments, and Happenings” 1961

2/25: FILM

### Week Eight

3/2: Cont Chapter 7 & midterm exam review

3/4: MIDTERM EXAM

### Week Nine

3/9 & 3/11: NO CLASS

## MIDTERM EXAM SLIDE IDs

### Chapter 3

- 3.6 Alexander Calder, *Object in Y*, 1955
- 3.11 Alexander Calder, *Bougainvillea*, 1947
- 3.17 Hans Hofmann, *Fantasia*, c. 1943
- 3.28 Arshile Gorky, *The Liver is the Cock's Comb*, 1944
- 3.34 Robert Motherwell, *Elegy to the Spanish Republic, No 78*, 1962
- 3.38 Willem de Kooning, *Woman and Bicycle*, 1952-53

### Chapter 4

- 4.1 Jackson Pollock, *Cathedral*, 1947
  - 4.10 Jackson Pollock, *Blue Poles, Number 11*, 1952
  - 4.16 Barnett Newman, *Vir Heroicus Sublimis*, 1950-51
  - 4/20 Mark Rothko, *Green and Tangerine on Red*, 1956
  - 4.27 Mark Rothko, *Number 22*, 1949
  - 4.41 David Smith, *Cubi XVII*, 1963
- The New York School – Action Painting and Color Field Painting

### Chapter 5

- 5.4 Jean Dubuffet, *Childbirth*, 1944
  - 5.11 Jean Dubuffet, *Business Prospers*, 1961
  - 5.16 Alberto Giacometti, *Man Pointing*, 1947
  - 5.17 Alberto Giacometti, *The City Square*, 1948-49
  - 5.22 Francis Bacon, *Study After Velazquez's Portrait of Pope Innocent X*, 1953
  - 5.23 Francis Bacon, *Self Portrait*, 1969
- Neo-Figuralism

### Chapter 6

- 6.1 Lucio Fontana, *Spatial Concept, 60 o 48*, 1960, 1960
  - 6.6 Alberto Burri, *Wheat*, 1956
  - 6.11 Morris Louis, *Tet*, 1958
  - 6.13 Josef Albers, *Homage to the Square: "Ascending,"* 1953
  - 6.14 Ad Reinhardt, *Abstract Painting*, 1960-6
  - 6.22 Lucian Freud, *Francis Bacon*, 1952
- Cy Twombly, Victor Vasarely, George Rickey, The Cobra Group & Richard Diebenkorn

### Chapter 7

- 7.5 Saburo Murakami, *Passing Through (21 panels of 42 papers)*, 1956
  - 7.8 Robert Rauschenberg, *Canyon*, 1959
  - 7.13 Robert Rauschenberg, *Skyway*, 1964
  - 7.21 Allan Kaprow, *Chicken*, 1962
  - 7.27 Jim Dine, *Five Feet of Colorful Tools*, 1962
  - 7.31 Claes Oldenburg, *Floor Cake (Giant Piece of Cake)*, 1962
  - 7.40 Claes Oldenburg, *Clothespin*, 1976
  - 7.42 Jasper Johns, *Three Flags*, 1958
  - 7.44 Jasper Johns, *False Start*, 1959
- John Cage, Merce Cunningham, the Gutai Art Association, Combines, Happenings, & Fluxus