



College of Arts and Humanities
Department of Art and Design
Spring 2025

ART 3005: Contemporary Art History

Meeting Time: MW 4 – 5:15 pm

Meeting location: Liberty Station Room 203

Final Exam: Wednesday, May 7th 4:30pm - 7pm

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Office Hours: or by Appointment
Office Location: (Deans' Center, Bond)
Schedule: M/W 1:45 pm-3:45 pm

PLNU Mission

To Teach ~ To Shape ~ To Send

Point Loma Nazarene University exists to provide higher education in a vital Christian community where minds are engaged and challenged, character is modeled and formed, and service is an expression of faith. Being of Wesleyan heritage, we strive to be a learning community where grace is foundational, truth is pursued, and holiness is a way of life.

General Education Mission

PLNU provides a foundational course of study in the liberal arts informed by the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. In keeping with the Wesleyan tradition, the curriculum equips students with a broad range of knowledge and skills within and across disciplines to enrich major

study, lifelong learning, and vocational service as Christ-like participants in the world's diverse societies and culture.

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

Contemporary Art History (3)

Exploration of contemporary art with reference to historical developments from the mid-20th century to the present. Aesthetics, criticism, gender issues, and Non-Western influences are also explored. What does it mean to interpret art in reference to knowing art history? What is the role of contemporary art?

REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS:

Story of Contemporary Art by Tony Godfrey. ISBN 9780262044103

Seven Days in the Art World by Sarah Thornton. ISBN-13: 978-0393067224

Course Learning Outcomes:

<u>Student Learning Outcome</u>	<u>Objective</u>	<u>Assignments used to assess</u>
"By the end of this course, students should be able to..." Recognize and describe historically important art objects from the 20 th & 21 st centuries.	Gaining factual knowledge and the ability to engage with works of art.	Exams and class participation.
Practice visual responses (painting, drawing, collage, photography, sculpture, etc.) in relation to specific modern art works and movements.	Learning to analyze and critically evaluate ideas, arguments and points of view in a visual language.	Visual reflections.
Practice the trade of a historian and the process of writing art histories.	Applying historical methodologies and developing a familiarity utilizing primary resources.	Writing assignment and readings.

Discuss and write how faith in Christ impacts an understanding of Modern Art.	Learning to analyze and critically evaluate ideas, arguments and points of view.	Class participation and writing assignments.
Write clear and concise statements utilizing the tools of an art historian. Accessing documents available in the library's permanent collection and academic databases.	Developing skills in expressing oneself in writing.	Writing assignments.
Articulate various modern/postmodern art philosophies in a debate style format.	Gaining factual knowledge and expressing oneself verbally.	Class participation

CREDIT HOURS:

In the interest of providing sufficient time to accomplish the stated Course Learning Outcomes, this class meets the PLNU credit hour policy for a 3-unit class delivered over 15 weeks. It is anticipated that students will spend a minimum of 37.5 participation hours per credit hour on their coursework. For this course, students will spend an estimated 112.5 total hours meeting the course learning outcomes. The time estimations are provided in the Canvas modules.

ASSESSMENT AND GRADING:

Grades will be based on the following:

*Participation matters – grades on the 'verge' will be evaluated basis on class participation

A	B	C	D	F
A 93-100	B+ 87-89	C+ 77-79	D+ 67-69	F Less than 59
A- 90-92	B 83-86	C 73-76	D 63-66	
	B- 80-82	C- 70-72	D- 60-62	

SPIRITUAL CARE:

PLNU strives to be a place where students grow as whole persons. To this end, we provide resources for our students to encounter God and grow in their Christian faith. If you have questions, a desire to meet with the chaplain, or if you have prayer requests, you can contact the [Office of Student Life and Formation](#).

STATE AUTHORIZATION:

State authorization is a formal determination by a state that Point Loma Nazarene University is approved to conduct activities regulated by that state. In certain states outside California, Point Loma Nazarene University is not authorized to enroll online (distance education) students. If a student moves to another state after admission to the program and/or enrollment in an online course, continuation within the program and/or course will depend on whether Point Loma Nazarene University is authorized to offer distance education courses in that state. It is the student's responsibility to notify the institution of any change in his or her physical location. Refer to the map on [State Authorization](#) to view which states allow online (distance education) outside of California.

INCOMPLETES AND LATE ASSIGNMENTS:

All assignments are to be submitted/turned in by the beginning of the class session when they are due—including assignments posted in Canvas. Incompletes will only be assigned in extremely unusual circumstances.

Final Examination Policy®

Successful completion of this class requires taking the final examination on its scheduled day. The final examination schedule is posted on the Traditional Undergraduate Records: Final Exam Schedules site. If you find yourself scheduled for three (3) or more final examinations on the same day, you are authorized to contact each professor to arrange a different time for one of those exams. However, unless you have three (3) or more exams on the same day, no requests for alternative final examinations will be granted.

Content Warning*

I acknowledge that each of you comes to PLNU with your own unique life experiences. This contributes to the way you perceive various types of information. In [class name], all of the class content, including that which may be intellectually or emotionally challenging, has been intentionally curated to achieve the learning goals for this course. The decision to include such material is not taken lightly. These topics include [list topics]. If you encounter a topic that is intellectually challenging for you, it can manifest in feelings of discomfort and upset. In response, I encourage you to come talk to me or your friends or family about it. Class topics are discussed for the sole purpose of expanding your intellectual engagement in the area of [subject/major], and I will support you throughout your learning in this course.

Trigger Warning*

I acknowledge that each of you comes to PLNU with your own unique life experiences. This contributes to the way you perceive several types of information. In [class name], we will cover a variety of topics, some of which you may find triggering. These topics include [list topics]. Each time this topic appears in a reading or unit, it is marked on the syllabus. The experience of being triggered versus intellectually challenged are different. The main difference is that an individual must have experienced trauma to experience being triggered, whereas an intellectual challenge has nothing to do with trauma. If you are a trauma survivor and encounter a topic in this class that is triggering for you, you may feel overwhelmed or panicked and find it difficult to concentrate. In response, I encourage you to take the necessary steps for your emotional safety. This may include leaving class while the topic is discussed or talking to a therapist at the Counseling Center. Should you choose to sit out on discussion of a certain topic, know that you are still responsible for the material; but we can discuss if there are other methods for accessing that material, and for assessing your learning on that material. Class topics are discussed for the sole purpose of expanding your intellectual engagement in the area of [subject/major], and I will support you throughout your learning in this course.

Language and Belonging*

Point Loma Nazarene University faculty are committed to helping create a safe and hospitable learning environment for all students. As Christian scholars we are keenly aware of the power of language and believe in treating others with dignity. As such, it is important that our language be equitable, inclusive, and prejudice free. Inclusive/Bias-free language is the standard outlined by all major academic style guides, including MLA, APA, and Chicago, and it is the expected norm in university-level work. Good writing and speaking do not use unsubstantiated or irrelevant generalizations about personal qualities such as age, disability, economic class, ethnicity, marital status, parentage, political or religious beliefs, race, gender, sex, or sexual orientation. Inclusive language also avoids using stereotypes or terminology that demeans persons or groups based on age, disability, class, ethnicity, gender, race, language, or national origin. Respectful use of language is particularly important when referring to those outside of the religious and lifestyle commitments of those in the PLNU community. By working toward precision and clarity of language, we mark ourselves as serious and respectful scholars, and we model the Christ-like quality of hospitality.

If you (or someone you know) have experienced a bias incident regarding language, you can find more information on reporting and resources at www.pointloma.edu/bias.

PLNU COPYRIGHT POLICY:

Point Loma Nazarene University, as a non-profit educational institution, is entitled by law to use materials protected by the US Copyright Act for classroom education. Any use of those materials outside the class may violate the law.

PLNU ACADEMIC HONESTY POLICY:

Students should demonstrate academic honesty by doing original work and by giving appropriate credit to the ideas of others. Academic dishonesty is the act of presenting information, ideas, and/or concepts as one's own when in reality they are the results of another person's creativity and effort. A faculty member who believes a situation involving academic dishonesty has been detected may assign a failing grade for that assignment or examination, or, depending on the seriousness of the offense, for the course. Faculty should follow and students may appeal using the procedure in the university Catalog. See [Academic Policies](#) for definitions of kinds of academic dishonesty and for further policy information.

PLNU ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATIONS POLICYⓈ

PLNU is committed to providing equal opportunity for participation in all its programs, services, and activities. Students with disabilities may request course-related accommodations by contacting the Educational Access Center (EAC), located in the Bond Academic Center (EAC@pointloma.edu or 619-849-2486). Once a student's eligibility for an accommodation has been determined, the EAC will issue an academic accommodation plan ("AP") to all faculty who teach courses in which the student is enrolled each semester.

PLNU highly recommends that students speak with their professors during the first two weeks of each semester/term about the implementation of their AP in that particular course and/or if they do not wish to utilize some or all of the elements of their AP in that course.

Students who need accommodations for a disability should contact the EAC as early as possible (i.e., ideally before the beginning of the semester) to assure appropriate accommodations can be provided. It is the student's responsibility to make the first contact with the EAC.

SEXUAL MISCONDUCT AND DISCRIMINATION:

Point Loma Nazarene University faculty are committed to helping create a safe learning environment for all students. If you (or someone you know) have experienced any form of sexual discrimination or misconduct, including sexual assault, dating or domestic violence, or stalking, know that help and support are available through the Title IX Office at pointloma.edu/Title-IX. Please be aware that under Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, it is required to disclose information about such misconduct to the Title IX Office. If you wish to speak to a confidential employee who does not have this reporting responsibility, you can contact Counseling Services at counselingservices@pointloma.edu or find a list of campus pastors at pointloma.edu/title-ix

PLNU ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION POLICY:

Regular and punctual attendance at all class sessions is considered essential to optimum academic achievement. If the student is absent for more than 10 percent of class sessions, the faculty member will issue a written warning of de-enrollment. If the absences exceed 20 percent, the student may be de-enrolled without notice until the university drop date or, after that date, receive the appropriate grade for their work and participation.

PLNU Recording Notification®

In order to enhance the learning experience, please be advised that this course may be recorded by the professor for educational purposes, and access to these recordings will be limited to enrolled students and authorized personnel.

Note that all recordings are subject to copyright protection. Any unauthorized distribution or publication of these recordings without written approval from the University (refer to the Dean) is strictly prohibited.

Tentative Course Schedule:

Week 1

Jan. 13

Goals: Introduction to Class, Review Syllabus, & Art Terms

Jan. 15

Goals: Taking Notes in Art History Class, Review Assignments, and the Story of Art & Modernism – **Come with a thought or question from the reading.**

Reading:

Introduction The Story of Contemporary Art, Godfrey

Arthur Danto, NY Times:

<https://archive.nytimes.com/www.nytimes.com/books/first/d/danto-art.html>

Week 2

Jan. 20, (MLK Day, No Class)

Jan. 22

Goals: Setting up Contemporary

Reading: Chapter One: The Wreckage of Modernism and After

Extras:

Ab Ex, Met Timeline:

https://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/abex/hd_abex.htm

Tate Museum:

<https://www.tate.org.uk/art/art-terms/a/abstract-expressionism>

Reading Reflection #1 due

Week 3

Jan. 27

Goals: Abstract Expressionism & Post-Painterly Abstraction

Jan. 29

Barrett:

http://www1.udel.edu/art/rmarquez/416/barrett_criticizing_art.pdf

In class: Reading Reflection #2 due

Reading: History of Modernism:

https://www.mdc.edu/wolfson/academic/artsletters/art_philosophy/humanities/history_of_modernism.htm

History.com:

<https://www.history.com/topics/art-history/history-of-modernism-and-post-modernism>

Assignment #1: Create a presentation on Canvas featuring 5-6 images that tells the story of Modernism. The story must be accompanied by a narrative that is 100 words explaining how these images represent this story.
(due on Jan. 29)

Read: Chapter 2 Tony Godfrey (The Story of Contemporary Art)

Week 4

Feb. 3

Goals: Neo-Dada & Pop Art, Hardedge and Minimalist Painting, Structuralist and Minimalist Sculpture.

Feb. 5

Goals: Installations, Earth Works, Site Art

The Art Story:

<https://www.theartstory.org/movement-earth-art.htm>

1st Online presentation due. Select one piece of contemporary art at the San Diego Museum of Art or La Jolla Museum of Art. Discuss why you selected the piece who the

artist is, their background, and a few other images by the artist. Place the artwork in some kind of historical context and why we would consider it a contemporary artwork and not modern.

Week 5

Feb. 10

Goals: Painting and American Neo-Expressionism

Readings: Artsy: <https://www.artsy.net/gene/neo-expressionism>

Feb. 12

Goals: The Photograph and Feminist Concerns in Art

Reading: Chapter 3 of Tony Godfrey (The Story of Contemporary Art)

Reflection #3 due

Week 6

Feb. 17

Objective: Modern and Contemporary Architecture

Architecture:

<https://www.sandiego.org/campaigns/sunny-7/7-modern-architecture-wonders-in-san-diego.aspx>

Feb. 19

Objective: A Global Perspective

Read: Chapter 4 & 5 of Tony Godfrey (The Story of Contemporary Art)

Canvas Presentation Assignment #2: Take a picture of the building (with you in it from the article 7 Modern Architectural wonders in San Diego) and describe in 100 words why this building is important for San Diego. Use the hashtag: #daichendtcontemporaryarthistory - (Due Feb. 19th)

Reflection #4 due

Week 7

Feb. 24

Goals: Visit Stuart Collection

Feb. 26

2nd Presentation due. Review the most engaging sculpture you found at the Stuart collection and compare it to one other sculpture onsite that is not as impressive. Use your own photos and include yourself in one of them engaging with the art.

Week 8

Mar. 3

Goals: Graffiti, Cartoons, Neo-Pop

Readings:

Daichendt:

<https://www.kcet.org/shows/artbound/a-wave-of-street-art-for-san-diego>

Artsy: <https://www.artsy.net/gene/contemporary-pop>

Watch: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=odsWUqKhA4k>

March 5

Goals: Street Art

Social Media Assignment #3: Instagram a piece of street art or graffiti (with you in the picture) and explain in 100 words why it should or should not be considered art. Use the hashtag: #daichendtcontemporaryarthistory - (Due March 18)

Reflection #5 due

Week 9

March 10 & 12 (Spring Break, No Class)

Week 10

March 17

Goals: Relational Aesthetics, Aesthetic Development, Conceptual, Performance, Installations

Reading VTS: <https://vtshome.org/aesthetic-development/>

Conceptual Art:

<https://www.khanacademy.org/humanities/global-culture/conceptual-performance/a/conceptual-art-an-introduction>

Read: Chapter 6 of Tony Godfrey (The Story of Contemporary Art)

March 19

Goals: Midterm

Reflection #6 due

Week 11

March 24

Goals: Art & Technology; Appropriation

Readings: MoMA:

https://www.moma.org/learn/moma_learning/themes/pop-art/appropriation/

March 26

Goals: The Role of Beauty and the Everyday in Contemporary Art

Readings:

Chapter 7 & 8 of Tony Godfrey (The Story of Contemporary Art)

Reflection #7 due

Week 12

March 31

Goals: Describing & Interpreting Art

Reading: Artsy: <https://www.artsy.net/article/artsy-editorial-6-tips-artists-talk-art>

Artspeak:

<https://www.theguardian.com/artanddesign/2013/jan/27/users-guide-international-art-english>

Apr. 2

Goals: The Role of Museums and Art Fairs

Reading:

Art Prize:

https://www.mlive.com/artprize/index.ssf/2014/09/how_to_explain_artprize_to_your_out-of-town_family_and_friends.html

Chapter 9 of Tony Godfrey (The Story of Contemporary Art)

Reflection #8 due

Week 13

April 7

Goals: Preview of ICA

April 9

Goals: Preview of MCSD

Week 14

April 14

April 16

3rd Presentation due

*Group Presentations on Seven Days in the Art World by Sarah Thornton

Assignment: Presentation Groups: 1. Auction 2. Art School Crit. 3. Artist's Studio 4. Prize
5. Magazine 6. Biennale (Venice)

Week 15

April 21 (no class)

Goals: What's the point of Art Criticism and Shock art

Reading CNN: <https://www.cnn.com/style/gallery/controversial-art/index.html>

Chapter 10 of Tony Godfrey (The Story of Contemporary Art)

April 23

Goals: San Diego Museums and the future of the art world

Reading: Is Painting Dead?

<http://www.bbc.com/culture/story/20150217-is-painting-dead>

Due: Written review of MCASD or ICA as venues for contemporary art

Week 16

April 28

Goals: What did we miss?

April 30

Goal: Review for Final Exam

Week 17

Final Exam

Presentation Guidelines

(First Presentation is based on the book "Seven Days in the Art World")

(Second Presentation is based on a single work in UCSD's collection)

- Presentation time - 15 minutes max
- Visuals aids/illustrations are required
- Do not read, talk from your outline or notes
- Two minute max prep/ set up time, come in early to test your disc and computer compatibility

Presentation should cover:

- Brief introduction of the artwork or chapter from book.
- Present the thesis/argument/interpretation of your presentation, and specify how you will prove this argument. Suggest how you will go about explaining your solution and what kinds of evidence you will use.

Organize your presentation around:

- Formal properties (based on your observations of the work);
- Meaning of the work based on style, iconography and original function
 - o Your analysis of the object compared to experts.
 - o Analysis from a Christian worldview.
- Historical/cultural context.
- How does your faith impact the way you understand the image? Artist?
- Conclusion: Briefly summarize your principal arguments, referring back to your thesis statement, and explain how your analysis extends to our understanding of the artwork.

Instructions for Selecting Artwork:

1 Choose your work carefully. Find a painting or a sculpture that "speaks" to you - not just emotionally, but intellectually.

2) Consider your response to the work. What emotions does it raise? What ideas does it provoke? What about the work, in particular, do you find provocative? How does the artist manage to evoke these ideas and feelings? Take notes.

3) Consider the formal elements of the work, taking note of all of your observations - big and small. Among the elements you will consider are:

- * Medium. Why is the artist using this particular medium? What are its advantages? Its limitations?

- * Lines. Are the lines thick or thin? Largely vertical or horizontal? Straight or curved? What is achieved by this particular use of line?

- * Color. Is the color realistic or expressive? Warm or cool? Bright or muted? And to what effect?

- * Light. How is light used? How is shadow used? Is there any play between the two? What is communicated to the viewer?

- * Space. What is the sense of space in the work you've chosen? Is there great depth, or is the visual plane shallow? How are the elements of the work configured in that space? How does the sense of space affect the subject matter? Affect your response to the work?

- * Composition. How do the various formal elements of the work interact? How does the composition convey the work's theme or idea? How does the eye move across the piece? How does the composition control that movement?

- * Style. What elements of the composition work to constitute the artist's style? The style of the period in which the artist was/is working?

4) Consider the context of the work. When was it created? By whom? Where? With what other works is it in conversation? What cultural or historical matters have influenced it? What cultural or historical matters does it seem to be addressing?

5) Look at your notes on the formal elements of the work in question. Then return to your initial notes on your response to the work. Do you see connections between what the artist has done, formally, and your own responses? Turn then to your comments on the work's context. Does analysis of the formal elements shed any light on contextual matters? Or vice versa? When you begin to see connections between the formal elements and the larger issues of context and personal response, you begin to see how you might make an argument about art.

FELDMAN METHOD OF ART CRITICISM
From Varieties of Visual Experience by E. B. Feldman (1987)

1. DESCRIPTION What can be seen in the artwork?
2. ANALYSIS What relationships exist with what is seen?
3. INTERPRETATION What is the content or meaning?
4. JUDGEMENT What is your evaluation of the work?

By following the Feldman Method the critical process is not passive, but active and exploratory. Notice that the process moves from strictly objective statements in step 1 to a subjective response in step 4 (or from specific to general).

Descriptive is a process of taking inventory. Noting what is immediately visible. Words should be neutral and avoid terms that denote value judgments, such as beautiful, disorderly, funny looking, harmonious, etc. Instead, focus on the factual information, such as smooth, bright, round, etc. Description should be as clear as possible. This is important so that you don't jump to conclusions before going through all the steps.

Analysis of relationships such as sizes, shapes, colors, textures, space and volumes, etc., encourages a complete examination of the artwork. It also reveals the decision making process of the artist, who wants the viewer to make certain connections within the artwork. In a formal analysis, one can go beyond a descriptive inventory to discover the relation between the elements of the art.

Interpretation is the meaning of the work based on the information based upon the previous steps. Interpretation is about ideas (not description) or sensation or feelings. Don't be afraid of revising your interpretation when new facts are discovered (such as the date of the artwork, or the personal history of the artist, etc.) Conversely, don't be reluctant to make an interpretation from your analysis of only the visual information.

Judgment, the final step, is often the first statement that is expressed about an artwork before it has really been examined. Judgment in that case is neither informed nor critical but simply an opinion.