

# INTRODUCTION TO CONTEMPORARY ART

**Art History 202, Spring 2017**

**Monday and Thursday, 11:30am–12:50pm, Murray Hall 301**

**Professor Isabel Taube**

**E-mail: itaube@rci.rutgers.edu**

**Please note: This class will have a Sakai course website.**

## **COURSE DESCRIPTION**

This course offers an introductory overview of major artists, artworks, and movements, since 1945, primarily in Europe and the United States but with some consideration of global developments. It surveys a broad range of media from painting, sculpture, photography, and video to digital technologies, installation, performance, and social practice. The class material, presented roughly chronologically and separated into movements and themes, begins with canonical art movements, such as Abstract Expressionism, Pop, and Minimalism, and then covers more recent trends, including appropriation, identity politics, relational aesthetics, and new media. Students read primary and secondary sources as well as watch videos of artists' talks. In addition, visits to galleries and museums in New York are encouraged, and seeing the exhibition, "Guerrilla Girls: Attitude and Activism" at the Zimmerli Art Museum at Rutgers is required. Other course requirements include a midterm and a final exam; a visual analysis paper; a reading response paper; a short writing assignment focused on an artwork; and an in-class writing assignment that serves as practice for the midterm exam.

## **COURSE FORMAT**

Although this is a lecture course, you will be encouraged to participate in class discussions, which will be factored into your grade. You must come to class prepared to discuss the readings and videos.

## **COURSE TEXTBOOKS**

- 1) David Hopkins, *After Modern Art, 1945–2000* (Oxford University Press, 2000), paperback.
- 2) Peter Kalb, *Art Since 1980: Charting the Contemporary* (Pearson, 2014), digital and paperback available.

## **COURSE IMAGES**

All the images for which you are responsible will be available on the course website on Sakai under Resources each week after Thursday's class lecture.

## **ASSIGNMENTS**

- 1) 2 Short Writing Assignments (a take-home analysis of an artwork, and an in-class practice for the midterm exam)
- 2) Reading Response Paper or Review of Gallery Show (a separate assignment sheet will be posted on Sakai; 3-4 pages, typed and double-spaced)

3) Compare and Contrast Visual Analysis Paper or Exhibition Review (a separate assignment sheet will be posted on Sakai; 4-5 pages, typed and double-spaced; you will be required to go to the Zimmerli Art Museum in New Brunswick or a museum in New York City)

4) Midterm Exam (the exam will include 1 take-home essay and an in-class compare/contrast of 3 pairs of images).

5) Final Exam: (the exam will include 1 cumulative take-home essay and an in-class compare/contrast of 3 pairs of images).

### **EVALUATION**

**All assignments must be completed to pass the course.**

Grades will be calculated as follows:

10% attendance and class participation

10% 2 short writing assignments

20% reading response paper

20% visual analysis or exhibition review paper

20% midterm exam

20% final exam

### **ADDITIONAL COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND POLICIES**

#### **CONDUCT CODE**

The Department of Art History expects all its students to attend every class, except in cases of illness, serious family concerns, or other major problems. We expect that students will arrive on time, prepared to listen and participate as appropriate, and to stay for the duration of a meeting rather than drift in or out casually. In short, we anticipate that students will show professors, teaching assistants, and fellow students maximum consideration by minimizing the disturbances that cause interruptions in the learning process. This means that punctuality is a “must,” that cell phones be turned off, and that courtesy is the guiding principle in all exchanges among students and faculty.

\* Turn off cell phones before class begins.

\* No walking in or out. If you must leave class early, please let me know in advance and sit in the back of the room.

\* No distracting behavior: i.e. texting, conversations, surfing the web, or email.

\* No cheating on any assignment. Instant failure for that assignment.

\* No plagiarism on the papers. Instant failure for that paper.

**CLASS PARTICIPATION: Attendance is mandatory and will be taken at the beginning of each class.** Students must attend all classes, complete all assigned readings before each class, arrive on time, participate in discussions, and take notes. Much of the class material is not repeated elsewhere, and you are responsible for all concepts presented in class. **Repeated absences will affect your grade and your ability to continue in the course.**

**NOTETAKING:** Since you are responsible for the material covered in class as well as in the readings, you will need to take comprehensive notes to help you study for the exams. On the exams, you will be asked not only to identify specific images but also to analyze them critically in terms of their social and historical context. **You may use a laptop to take notes.**

**CHEATING/PLAGIARISM: Cheating on exams, plagiarizing (copying another person's work and claiming it as your own), and all other forms of academic dishonesty will not be permitted and will result in the receipt of a failing grade for the course.** Please familiarize yourself with Rutgers' official Academic Integrity Policy: <http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/academic-integrity-policy/>.

**DISABILITIES:** Full disability policies and procedures can be found here: <http://disabilityservices.rutgers.edu/>

Students with disabilities requesting accommodations must follow the procedures outlined at <http://disabilityservices.rutgers.edu/request.html>.

### **PRELIMINARY SCHEDULE OF CLASSES (subject to change)**

Jan. 19: Introduction and Background Information about American Modernism

Week of January 23: Abstract Expressionism and European Informel

Week of January 30: Neo-Dada and Assemblage

Week of February 6: Pop Art

Week of February 13: Minimalism, Conceptual Art, and Institutional Critique

Week of February 20: Happenings and Performance Art

Week of February 27: Site Specific and Environmental Art

Week of March 6: Postmodernism and Appropriation; Midterm Exam

Week of March 13: Spring Break, no classes

Week of March 20: Feminist Art and the Politics of the Body

Week of March 27: African-American Critiques and Histories

Week of April 3: Globalization and Collectivism

Week of April 10: Relational Art and Social Practice

Week of April 17: Curation as Art and Critique

Week of April 24: Bio Art and New Media

Week of May 1: Last class: Wrap up and review

Date of Final Exam: to be determined.