



Yoko Ono, *Cloud Piece*, 1963

University of Texas at Dallas
Arts & Humanities
Spring 2024

Contemporary Art
AHST 3318-001
(28096)
Dr. Charissa N. Terranova
We 1:00-3:45
JO 4.614
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Office Hours: By appointment
Office Location: ATC. 2.704

Description:

This course offers a survey of the history of contemporary art, 1948-present. Themes include curating decolonization, Afro-Atlantic histories, neo-Dada, gestural painting, Pop art, Fluxus, happenings, performance art, art and the mass media, interactive art, electronic art, conceptualism, Black portraiture, Afrofuturism, eco-art, and bio-art.

Goals and Outcomes:

- Define and understand the following terms: modernism, postmodernism, contemporary art, and the avant-garde.
- Identify the salient characteristics of contemporary art and the themes listed above.
- Gain knowledge of the history and theory of contemporary art.
- Improve skills of public speaking, engagement, and discourse in class.
- Improve research skills.
- Improve expository writing skills.

Requirements:

Students are required to attend every class, complete all assignments (reading, writing, in-class presentations, and exams), and participate with candor, verve, and commitment in class.

Mode of Class:

All class meetings are in-person.

Reading Assignments:

All reading assignments are available through library reserves accessible at elearning.

Teachback – I teach! You teach! We all teach! (25% x 2 = 50%)

Polymathic intermedia artist and engineer Gordon Pask coined the word “teachback” fifty years ago to identify the generative circular feedback between teachers and students that constitutes learning on both sides. Pask argued that teaching must have a component of learning and, likewise, learning of teaching. In this class teachback identifies short presentations made by students during the first half of each class based on short essays they’ve written about the reading assignment from the prior week. Students make two teachback presentations over the semester. Each is based on the reading and one work of art the student has chosen. The work can come **from inside or outside** the reading. If there are two essays assigned in one week, **students choose only one essay on which to focus**. The teachback presentation schedule is posted at elearning.

Writing prompt each week is: **What did you like best about the reading assignment?**

Contents of essays:

- Presentations are made up two things: the essay and a work of art.
- Students read their essays in front the class while intermittently engaging a projected work of art/artifact during teachback at the beginning of class each Wednesday.
- This is followed by questions and discussion.
- Individual presentations take roughly 10-15 minutes; discussion takes 15-20.
- Professor creates a powerpoint presentation each week with images of works of art chosen by students.
- The essay should engage **one** of the readings assigned the past Wednesday by **summarizing, paraphrasing, and making critical commentary**.
- Tell your listeners and reader (Dr. Terranova) what you liked (and didn't like) about the reading assignment.

Writing requirements and tips:

- Students may include only one quote no longer than three lines from the reading assignment.
- Your essay should include one work of art.
- Do not use the first person or passive voice. Write objectively using the active voice.
 - Passive voice: "The lecture was given by Cynthia."
 - Active voice: "Cynthia gave the lecture."
- Model your writing after sophisticated journalism. I like *The New York Times*, *The Atlantic*, and *New York Review of Books*. My husband regularly reads the British Film Institute's *Sight and Sound*, a magazine devoted to film and film criticism. What journalism do you read regularly?
- Avoid hyperbole, or exaggeration.
- Essay grades are based on syntax, spelling, grammar, and contents.

How should I format my essay?

- Left-hand justified heading with name of student, course number, professor's name, date
- Double spaced
- 12 pt. font
- **500-550 words**
- Include an image of the work of art/artifact in the document
- Your image should be accompanied by a caption that identifies the object by title, who made it (if known), and the year it was made.

What are some tips on how I should make my classroom presentation?

- Speak slowly and clearly.
- Brief silences are good. They are called "pregnant pauses." They help everyone breathe thoughtfully while thinking about the contents of your essay and the reading assignment.
- Engage the work of art/artifact you've chosen.
- Describing the work of art/artifact provides a good opportunity to engage the projected image before the class.
- Every so often, one should look up from the essay while they're reading in order to make eye contact with the audience.

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Where do I find the assignment schedule so I know when to prepare and present?

- Students find the assignment schedule with individual names and dates at elearning.

What kind of object should I include with my essay?

- Choose something you like.
- The professor will help by providing examples beyond the reading if necessary.

When and where do I submit the image of my work of art/artifact each week?

- Submit an image of the work of art by 5 pm to a file at elearning the Tuesday prior to the Wednesday of your presentation.
- Your image file (tiff, jpg, or pdf) should be titled with your last name.
- Dr. Terranova arrives to each Wednesday to class with a powerpoint presentation containing the images for each student presentation that day.
- Include a copy of the image also with the final version of your essay.

When and where do I submit my final essay?

- Students submit their final essay at midnight on the day of the presentation to elearning.

Mid-Term and Final Exams (25% x 2 = 50%):

There are two exams in the class, a mid-term exam on March 7 and a final exam the date of which is TBA. They have two components: slide identification and short essay. In the first portion of each exam, students identify 20 works of art from memory from a list of 35 located in a review sheet distributed two weeks prior; in the second portion, students choose their two favorite works of art they have learned about in class up to that point, identifying it by the artist's name, title of work, and date. Students then write why the work of art is important in history and to them personally. The final exam is not cumulative.

Grades:

Teachback #1	25%
Teachback #2	25%
Mid-Term Exam	25%
Final Exam	<u>25%</u>
TOTAL	100%

Schedule:

Wednesday January 17

Introduction to Terms and Themes: Modernism, Postmodernism, and Contemporary Art; The Avant-Garde versus Avant-Gardes

-Gaughan, Martin, "Narrating the Dada Game Plan," in *Art of the Avant-Gardes* (Art of the Twentieth Century) (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2004) 339-358.

-Nochlin, Linda, "Why have there been no great women artists?" in *Art and Sexual Politics: Why have there been no great women artists?*, eds. Thomas B. Hess and Elizabeth C. Baker (New York: Collier A Division of McMillan, 1973) 1-39.

-Vikram, Anuradhapura, *Decolonizing Culture: Essays on the Intersection of Art and Politics* (San Francisco: Art Practical Books, 2017) 23-50.

Wednesday January 24 Site Visit to the Dallas Museum of Art at 2:00 pm

Afro-Atlantic Histories at the DMA: Curating Culture and Truths in the Contemporary World

Location: 1717 N. Harwood St. Dallas, TX 75201

-Pedrosa, Adriano, "History, historias," in *Afro-Atlantic Histories* (New York: DelMonico, 2022).

-Willis, Deborah, "Visualizing slavery: image and text," in *Afro-Atlantic Histories* (New York: DelMonico, 2022).

Wednesday January 31

From Drip to Dance: Abstract Expressionism and the Rise of the Happening

-Marter, Joan, "Missing in Action: Abstract Expressionist Women," in *Women of Abstract Expressionism* (Denver: Denver Museum of Art, 2016).

-Collins, Bradford R., "Life Magazine and the Abstract Expressionists, 1948-51: A Historiographic Study of a Late Bohemian Enterprise," *Art Bulletin*, Vol. 73, No. 2 (Jun., 1991) 283-308.

Wednesday February 7

Fluxus and Intermedia Art

- O'Dell, Kathy. "Fluxus femininus." *TDR* [Cambridge, Mass.], vol. 41, no. 1, spring 1997, pp. 43+

-Higgins, Dick, "Statement on Intermedia," <http://artpool.hu/Fluxus/Higgins/intermedia2.html>

Wednesday February 14

Global Pop!

-Whiting, Cécile, Introduction and Ch. 1 of *A Taste for Pop: Pop Art, Gender, and Consumer Culture* (Cambridge: CUP, 1997).

- Steinberg, Leo "The Flatbed Picture Plane," in *Other Criteria: Confrontations with Twentieth-Century Art* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007) <http://web.mit.edu/allanmc/www/othercriteria.pdf>.

Wednesday February 21 Site Visit to The Warehouse/Mid-Term Exam Review

For What It's Worth: Value Systems in Art Since 1960

Location: The Warehouse, 14105 Inwood Road, Dallas, TX 75244

-Wark, Jayne, "Conceptual Art and Feminism: Martha Rosler, Adrian Piper, Eleanor Antin, and Martha Wilson," *Woman's Art Journal*, Vol. 22, No. 1 (Spring-Summer 2001) 44-50.

Wednesday February 28 Guest Artists Aiso Caro Chacin and Adam Zaretsky, Contemporary Bioartists

-Terranova, Charissa "Bioart and Bildung Wetware: Art, Agency, Animation, an Exhibition as Case Study." *Journal of Microbiology and Biology Education*, 2016 Dec; 17(3): 409–416.

Wednesday March 7 Mid-Term Exam

Wednesday March 13 Spring Break: No Class

Wednesday March 20

Perception in Motion: New Tendencies, GRAV, and Op Art

-Terranova, Charissa, "The Phenomenological Cybernetics of Op, Kinetic, and New Tendencies Art, 1961–1968" in the exhibition catalogue. *Vertigo: Op Art and a History of Deception, 1520-1970*, eds. Eva Badura-Triska and Markus Wörgötter (Vienna: MUMOK Museum of Modern Art, 2019).

Wednesday March 27

Groundswell: Women of Land Art Guest Speaker: Dr. Leigh Arnold, Curator at the Nasher Sculpture Center

-Arnold, Leigh, "Exceeding the Field of Vision," in *Groundswell: Women of Land Art* (New York: DelMonico Books, 2023) 13-25.

-Lippard, Lucy, *Overlay: Contemporary Art and the Art of Prehistory* (New York: The New Press, 1995) 41-76.

Wednesday April 3

Conceptual and Performance Art Guest Speakers: Dr. Laura Kim and Professor SV Randall, Artists

-Lippard, Lucy R. and John Chandler, "The Dematerialization of Art," *Art International*, 12:2 (February 1968) 31-36.

-Abramović, Marina, Chris Thompson and Katarina Weslien, "Pure Raw: Performance, Pedagogy, and (Re)presentation," *PAJ: A Journal of Performance and Art*, Vol. 28, No. 1 (Jan., 2006) 29-50.

Wednesday April 10

Bodies in Action: Civil Rights and Feminism in Art

-Larry Neal, "The Black Arts Movement," *Drama Review*, 1968—National Humanities Center Resource Toolbox, *The Making of African American Identity*, Vol. III, 1917-1968

-Mary Kelly and Paul Smith, "No Essential Femininity," in *The Art of Art History: A Critical Anthology*, Donald Preziosi, ed. 370-382.

Wednesday April 17 Site Visit: The Nasher Sculpture Center

Sarah Sze and Scatter Art

Location: Nasher Sculpture Center, 2001 Flora Street, Dallas, TX 75201

-"The Randomness of All These Things Is Actually Really Precise: Sarah Sze," Sarah Sze and Isabella Zamboni in *Conversation at Mouse Magazine* (11/21/2018) <https://www.moussemagazine.it/magazine/sarah-sze-gagosian-isabella-zamboni-2018/>

Wednesday April 24

Bodies in Action: Queerness and Progressive Masculinity

-Phelan, Peggy, "Serrano, Mapplethorpe, the NEA and You: 'Money Talks': October 1989," *TDR* (1988-) Vol. 34, No. 1 (Spring 1990) 4-15.

-Terranova, Charissa, "Machismo, Castration, Homophobia: A Progressive Politics of Masculinity in the Work of Gober, Barney, and McCarthy." *thresholds* 37. (Spring 2010) 20-30.

Wednesday May 1

Contemporary Avant-Gardes in Art, Design, and Beyond: Afrofuturism, Black portraiture, and Ecoart

Guest Speaker: Christopher Blay, Curator at the Houston Museum of African American Culture

-Paul, Primrose, "The Promise it Makes: Art and the Afro-Futuristic Future, in *Field: A Journal of Socially-Engaged Art Criticism*, No. 23 (Spring 2023).

-Manolescu, Monica, "The Harrisons' Art of Generosity: Poetics and Ecology," *Field: A Journal of Socially-Engaged Art Criticism*, No. 23 (Spring 2023).

Final Exam TBA