



From the Non-Visible Museum of Art

HUAS 6315-001 (20389)
Conceptual Art:
The History of Dematerialization
Dr. Charissa N. Terranova
Spring 2012
Thursday 10-12:45
Seminar Location: JO 4.112
Office Location: JO 3.920
Office Hours: Tuesday 4:00-6:00
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Description

This is a seminar devoted to close readings of philosophy and aesthetic criticism and theory on the broad subject of “dematerialization” in art.

The “dematerialization of the art object” is a phrase closely related to the years 1966-1972, a period of social upheaval and public demonstration across the world and, more precisely, radical transformation in the art world. While artists had been experimenting with process, matter, site and space for some time – giving rise to Happenings, performance art, kinetic art, early computer art, Minimalism, etc. – the six years between 1966 and 1972 have been codified as the official temporal container of dematerialization and art as idea, or Conceptualism. This seminar challenges that tidy container by historicizing the dematerialization of the work of art and looking to Conceptualism in the *longue durée*.

Goals of Course

- Learn the history of Conceptualism and dematerialization in art.
- Learn how to think critically about contemporary art and its cultural and political ramifications.
- Learn how to identify and critically discuss Conceptualism and dematerialization in art.
- Habituate close and analytical reading of texts.
- Hone critical writing skills through three written assignments.
- Hone research skills by using library on campus.
- Habituate engagement with the arts community of DFW through assigned visits to the Nasher Sculpture Center and DMA.

Requirements

Students are required to attend every scheduled seminar meeting, complete the assigned reading prior to class, and participate with verve and gusto in seminar discussions. Students are allowed one unexcused absence after which every unexcused absence will result in a deduction of ½ grade in the computation of the final mark.

Readings: DOCUTEK and Texts for Purchase

Some reading assignments are located in your books available for purchase at the bookstore; others are on-line at DOCUTEK.

The URL for DOCUTEK is: <http://utdallas.docutek.com/eres/coursepage.aspx?cid=1233>

Password: spectacle

The following books are available for purchase at the bookstore:

- G.W.F. Hegel, *Lectures on Fine Art (Aesthetics) Volume 1*, trans. by T. M. Knox.
- Gottfried Ephraim Lessing, *Laocoon: An Essay on the Limits of Painting and Poetry* (Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1984).

- Thierry de Duve, *Pictorial Nominalism: On Marcel Duchamp's Passage from Painting to the Readymade* (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota, 2005).
- Rosalind E. Krauss, *A Voyage on the North Sea: Art in the Age of the Post-Medium Condition* (London: Thames & Hudson, 2000).
- Marshall McLuhan, *Understanding Media: The Extensions of Man* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press).
- Mark B. N. Hansen, *Bodies in Code: Interfaces with Digital Media* (London: Routledge Press, 2006).
- Frank Popper, *From Technological to Virtual Art* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2007).

Course Documents and Images

All documents and slide presentations are available at www.charissaterranova.com.

Museum Visits, Written Assignments, and Final Presentation

Written assignment #1 is due February 16. For this assignment you must write a 700-word review of *Elliott Hundley: The Bacchae* at the Nasher Sculpture Center located at 2001 Flora Street, Dallas, Texas 75201.

Assuming the voice of *New York Times* art critic, you should focus on the artist's work, process, materials, and curatorial concept, i.e. gallery placement, lighting, and relationships. Further details on admission:

- Admission is free the first Saturday of every month
- Student admission is \$8.00
- Joint admission with the DMA is \$8.00

Written assignment #2 is due March 29. For this assignment you must write a 700-word review of *Mark Manders: Parallel Occurrences/Documented Assignments* at the Dallas Museum of Art located at 1717 North Harwood Street, Dallas, TX 75201. Assuming the voice of *New York Times* art critic, you should focus on the artist's work, process, materials, and curatorial concept, i.e. gallery placement, lighting, and relationships. Further details on admission:

- Students (with a current school ID): \$5
- Admission is free the first Tuesday of each month (Special ticket prices may apply to exhibitions)
- Thursday Nights, 5–9 p.m. are free for students with a current school ID

Final Presentation Students are required to make a polished final presentation of their research and final paper topic. As part of the presentation, students should make a pertinent reading assignment ahead of time to the class as a whole. The presentations will take place in the last seminar meetings.

Written assignment #3 is due May 10. This is a longer research paper. Choose one philosopher, critic, or artist and write about a system of ideas or a work of art of which he or she is the author. Your paper should have a thesis statement – an argument – based on your research. I encourage you to meet with me during office hours (or otherwise) to discuss your interests and passions in relation to this topic. The requirements for the research paper are as follows:

- title page, 10-12 pt. font, standard margins
- thesis statement in the body of text on the first or second page
- 20 pages
- pagination
- foot- or endnotes
- bibliography with 8 sources, of which 2 can be websites

Tips: In terms of writing style, please avoid the passive voice, hyperbole and cliché. Simplistic and unfounded descriptions of art, such as "it is beautiful," "he is a genius," or "this is an amazing masterpiece," are banned from this writing assignment. It is the voice and stance of the critic (art, architecture, film and book) that you will assume for this writing. **Remember that plagiarism is grounds for expulsion from the university.** The written assignments must be submitted in paper: I do not accept late or electronic documents.

Grades

Written Assignment #1	20 %
Written Assignment #2	20 %
Participation/Presentation	20 %

-Jack Burnham, "Real Time Systems," *Artforum*, Vol. 8, No. 1 (September 1969) 49-55. DOCUTEK
-Jack Burnham, "Alice's Head: Reflections on Conceptual Art," *Artforum*, Vol. 8, No. 6 (February 1970) 37-43. DOCUTEK
-Jack Burnham, "Art and Technology: The Panacea that Failed," *The Myths of Information*, ed. Kathleen Woodward (New York: Coda Press, 1980) DOCUTEK

Thursday April 5 Virtualization

-Frank Popper, *From Technological to Virtual Art* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2007). Text for Purchase

Thursday April 12 Embodiment

-Mark B. N. Hansen, *New Philosophy for New Media* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2006). 21-92 DOCUTEK and/or Text for Purchase

Thursday April 19 Presentations

Thursday April 26 Presentations

Thursday May 3 Rachofsky House Visit