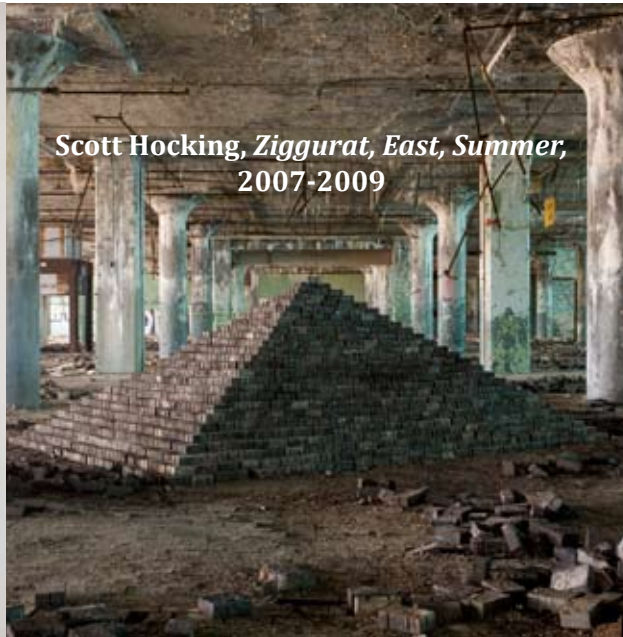


Jeffrey Gibson, Everlast, 2011-12



Scott Hocking, Ziggurat, East, Summer, 2007-2009



Amy Youngs, Machine for Living Interdependently, 2012



AH370: 20th/21st Century Art

Cai Guo-Qiang, Head On, 2006



Nicola Lopez, "Fallout," 2008

Mary Sibande, Her Majesty Queen Sophie, 2010



AH370: 20th/21st Century Art
Contemporary Art: Theory, Practice, Institutions
Tuesday/Thursday 6pm-7:15pm
LA 236
Fall 2014

Instructor: Sarah Nesbitt
Adjunct Professor of Art
Marygrove College
Office Hours: Tuesday/Thursday 1- 4pm and by appointment
snesbitt@marygrove.edu

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course is intended to give you an overview of the trends of contemporary art practices in the Twentieth and Twenty-First Centuries, while allowing you to dig deeper into specific areas of interest. As a class, we will journey down two parallel paths this semester. First, we will identify themes that have inspired creative expression for generations, but that have particular relevance to the last few decades: Language, Identity, The (Human) Body, Memory, Time, Science/Technology. Viewing these as the floors of a building, we will explore the manifestation of these themes across time and place, ultimately to understand the common links among artists as creative, sentient, and communal beings. The other path will be to differentiate the context of the artworks' conception, production, and reception by the public. How does the notion of identity manifest in Hannah Hoch's photo montages (1930s), Yoko Ono's Cut Piece (1965), or Kara Walker's cut-paper silhouettes (1990s - present)?

They each critically address race, gender, sexuality, and power but the cultural and chronological context of their creation differs. Our goal will be to understand the threads of continuity as well as the circumstantial differences of art in the 20th and 21st century.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

- Understand the roots of contemporary art in the history of art across cultures.
- Synthesize and articulate information about disparate artists and genres as they apply to broader themes.
- Situate specific artists and movements in their social, cultural, or political contexts.
- Command a knowledge of theoretical frameworks that define art historical movements.
- Develop research skills including the definition of your interests and pursuing them with persistence and thoroughness.
- Refine and augment critical writing skills.
- * Become more connected and familiar with the art community in Detroit and beyond.

READINGS, SUPPLIES & RESOURCES:

Required Textbook

Hopkins, David. *After Modern Art 1945-2000*. Oxford University Press: 2000.

Supplies

A 3-Ring Binder (1-2 inch)

IMPORTANT NOTE: For all reading assignments beyond the required textbook, I will print out or scan reading assignments and provide them electronically (either email or blackboard). If you have articles/ chapters that you would like to share with the class concerning your day to lead discussion, please send them to me so that I may make copies and/or post them.

Recommended Books

Barnet, Sylvan. *A Short Guide to Writing About Art*. Pearson: 2007-2014

Berger, John. *Ways of Seeing*. British Broadcasting Company: 1972

Foster, Hal; Krauss, Rosalind; Bois, Yves-Alain; Buchloh, Benjamin H. D.. *Art Since 1900: Modernism, Anti-Modernism, Post- Modernism, (Vol. 2)*. Ed. Thames & Hudson: 2009.

Pincus, Julie; Christain, Nichole; Bunk, Ben; Voo, Billy. *Canvas Detroit*. Wayne State University Press: 2014.

Robertson, Jean and McDaniel, Craig. *Themes of Contemporary Art: Visual Art After 1980 (Third Edition)*. Oxford University Press: 2012

Stiles, Kristine and Selz, Peter. *Theories and Documents of Contemporary Art: A Sourcebook of Artists' Writings*. University of California Press: 1996.

Writing About Art

I encourage you to work vigorously at refining your ability to organize, articulate, and craft and argument on the page. I am happy to consult with you during office hours, but also to take advantage of campus resources as I am not frequently on campus. Information about the Writing Center (located at LA 028) is included at the end of the syllabus. I encourage you also to purchase the recommended text: *A Short Guide to Writing About Art* by Sylvan Barnet. It is a useful tool for beyond this class and I encourage you to invest in it by owning a copy.

Researching Contemporary Art

Kapsul: www.kapsul.org

Hyperallergic: www.hyperallergic.com

Build on theories by pulling works that you think relate to a concept from class.

Contemporary Detroit galleries and Art Collectives are especially community driven, socially engaged, focusing on DIY, renovation, repurposing, reinvigorating decay, empowerment, and celebrating Detroit's identity. An incomplete list to get you started:

Museums

Arab-American Museum
C.H. Wright Museum of African-American History
Cranbrook Academy & Museum
DIA
Eli and Edythe Broad Art Museum at MSU
MBAD's African Bead Museum
MoCAD
University of Michigan Museum of Art

Galleries

2739 Edwin Gallery
555 Gallery
College for Creative Arts Galleries
Dell Prior Gallery
Detroit Artists Market
Live Coal Gallery
N'Namdi Center for Contemporary Art
Oakland University Gallery
Susanne Hilberry Gallery
Wayne State University Gallery
WCCCD Art Gallery

Art Collectives/ Multi-functional Venues:

323 East
Butter Projects
CAID (Detroit Contemporary)
Carr Center
Detroit Exchange/ Tangent Gallery
Hatch: Hamtramick Arts Collective
Heidelberg Project
Kunsthalle Detroit
Library Street Collective
Jam Handy
Power House Productions
Public Pool
Red Bull House of Art
Russell Industrial Center
Scarab Club
Spread Art
Trinosophes
What Pipeline
Whitdel Arts

LetterPress/ Communal Print Studios:

Signal-Return Press
Salt & Cedar

*For more sign up for the emailed newsletter at <http://artdetroitnow.com/>

CLASS FORMAT & PARTICIPATION

Seminar –

This class will take the form of a weekly seminar to be developed in real time with the participation of ALL seminar members. We meet twice a week, thus attendance is essential to create a cohesive and energetic study group. The goal here is to investigate the material in as efficient and profound a setting as possible, so your presence and preparedness will only serve to strengthen our endeavor. The broad realm of contemporary art as it happens anywhere in the world is our domain, including the legacy of the past and inclusion of new media.

CELL PHONE USE IS PROHIBITED (take a break from your mobile devices!)

Leading Class/Presentations

Seminar will include a presentation by the instructor and/or activity relevant to that week's content followed by critical discussion of the themes at hand. Each of you will be required to lead discussion for two class periods, pulling out the core concepts from readings and providing other relevant materials for your classmates to consider. In addition to the readings I will routinely ask you to draw on your knowledge of previous periods of Art History or other socio-cultural circumstances that bear relevance to understanding the work. Discussion leaders must each bring and be prepared to talk about an additional case study (artist/art work/exhibition) that is relevant to that week's theme. Prepare a list of questions that arose as you read the texts. What themes are consistent among the readings? What arguments contradict or complicate each other? Feel free to show online videos, audio sources (interviews, etc.), images, or actual objects to illustrate your point.

In preparation for your final Research paper you will be required to give a 20 minute synoptic presentation of the same content.

Written Assignments

Weekly Critical Response (Due by the beginning of the class for which the content is intended). Writings should consist of 50% reflection and 50% critical analysis of all the week's materials. Length of response should be no more than one-two pages, 12-font, single-spaced. These can be written in the first person as they are essentially expressing the writer's opinions. Please bring a hard copy to seminar.

Gallery/Event Critical Essays (Due no later than 2 weeks following the event)

Write a one-page response from an art exhibition, either at Marygrove College or beyond.

Analysis Paper (Due in class 10/16/14) 3-5 page synthesis of sources pertaining to one of the themes thus far introduced in the semester. Choose ONE artist whose work resonates strongly with that theme and give multiple examples of why and how. Dissect her/his work and pull out secondary or tertiary themes that are noteworthy.

Research Paper (Due 12/11/14) 7-10 page critical essay of a focused selection of artists pertaining to a chosen theme. Contextualization in time, culture, and art world trends is essential. Although the artists may comprise a diverse group of styles, approaches, cultural background, etc., you must establish clear links among them in order to explore their relationship to each other.

Field Research and Class Trips

Because we meet in the evenings our options for group trips to museum or gallery visits may be limited. Therefore, you will be required to attend a minimum of 2 events related to contemporary art happening in Detroit or the surrounding area. Sign up for the emailed newsletter from <http://artdetroitnow.com/> where you will find there are more things happening than you could ever practically manage to attend. Pre-approval from the instructor is necessary for credit so email me a link to the event, a short description of what it is and why you find it relevant to the course.

COLLEGE / CLASSROOM POLICIES

Creating an Inclusive Classroom Culture

Marygrove College maintains a supportive academic environment for students with disabilities. To ensure equal access to all educational programs, activities and services, students with disabilities should notify the College, provide documentation, and request reasonable accommodations. If you require academic accommodations in this course, you must contact Disability Support Services by email dss@marygrove.edu to establish an accommodations plan with the Coordinator.

I hope that you will feel comfortable enough to contact me, whether or not you contact Disability Support Services, should you have any concern about your ability to complete the coursework.

Course Expectations

Students are expected to arrive prepared and on time to each class session. The class will be rigorous but also gratifying; we place high expectations on students and anticipate a high level of commitment and engagement in return. I expect that the class will be enjoyable and ground breaking as long as students come with an open mind and a willingness to work hard, take risks, and be challenged.

Attendance

Attendance is mandatory and will be taken at the start of every class session. If a student is absent, it is the student's responsibility to find out what was missed and what was needed to prepare for the next class. In addition to contacting me, students should also contact a classmate to find out about any assignments not indicated on the course outline. In the case of an emergency absence, please contact me as soon as possible. More than 3 unexcused absences will result in a failing grade for the course. Students are marked absent if arriving later than 15 minutes to class or leaving 15 minutes early.

Participation

Success in a art history class is dependent upon presence and participation in discussion in addition to interaction with other students. Student participation envelopes a range of behavior relating to presence of mind and body in class. This includes: regular attendance, leading class, contribution to the class tumblr, communication with the instructor and with classmates, active contribution to class discussions, and completion of all assignments. Come prepared to contribute your reflections on assignments or readings and ready to ask questions--even if you feel uncertain! Participation will reflect commitment to the assignments and dedication to creating quality work. I welcome students' points of view and inquiries; my goal is to foster a robust creative and intellectual environment in which students can learn and thrive.

Behavior in class also affects the student's grade. Students should be prepared to:

- Turn off all phones
- Keep conversations related to the class topic or activity
- Be courteous and respectful of others

EXPECTATIONS & EVALUATION

- Completion of weekly readings/ viewings before class.
- Attending minimum 2 external events pertaining to Contemporary Art and 2 page written assessment.
- Thoughtful, self-led investigation of topics for reflective writings, research for critical essays, and presentations.
- Participation in in-class discussion, leading class, and fieldtrips

Late Assignment Policy

All assignments are to be completed and submitted on dates indicated. Late assignments, including presentations and leading class discussion, will not receive full credit unless you communicate with me directly and in advance about an extenuating circumstance. Late work will be marked down one partial letter grade per day (B to B- to C+ etc.). Students will have an opportunity to rework a report, if desired, to better their grade. Works that were not turned in on time for the original deadline will not be eligible for rework. Artist research paper is not eligible for rework.

Evaluation Criteria

Grading Scale: 100-93 A, 92-90 A-, 88-89 B+, 83-87 B, 80-82 B-, 78-79 C+, 70-77 C, 68-69 C-, 65-67 D+, 60-64 D, 55-59 D-, 54-0 F

Participation & General Preparedness: 15 points each: 420

Weekly critical responses: 5 points each (14 weeks)= 70 points

Leading class discussion: 15 points, each time you do it= 30 points

Gallery reports: 30 points each = 60 points

Analysis Essay: 75 points

Presentation on Research Paper: 100 points

Research Paper: 125 points

Total points: 880

Extra Credit is available anytime. (Additional 3 points to lowest grade)

It can be in the form of Visiting lectures, galleries or museums **outside** of the Marygrove College and writing a one-page response from it. Use MLA format if citing sources, and type in a proper format (Introduction, body and conclusion).

Academic Integrity & Plagiarism

Plagiarism still applies to studio art and will not be tolerated. Cheating of any kind will result in an automatic zero for the assignment and the student may fail the course. Appropriate citations are mandatory in attributing works of visual art or published writing. Use MLA format if citing sources, and type in a proper format (Introduction, body and conclusion). Please refer to your student handbook which outlines this policy.

Contacting Me

Please feel free to contact me via email snesebitt@marygrove.edu or come to my office hours (Tuesday/Thursday 1pm-4pm or by appt., LA Building). Please know that I will not respond to email after 8pm or before 7am.

Week 1: Introductions

September 2

- Overview of course structure and Roots of Contemporary Art
- Fill out Questionnaire, Introductions
- 1st Assignment: "What's your favorite Artist/Artwork?" (At least 1 page)

September 4

Reading of "What's your favorite Artist/Artwork" Assignment
Introduction to Modernism, Postmodernism and Contemporary Art

Week 2: Introduction- After the End of Art, Formalism/Structuralism, Post-Structuralism, & Deconstruction

September 9

Discussion of 1st Reading: "After the End of Art"

September 11

Discussion of 2nd Reading: "What Is Structuralism?"

Week 3: Language (Neo Dada, Surrealism, Experiments with Photography)

September 16: Discussion of 3rd Reading from Textbook- After Modern Art p. 37-48

September 18: Reading Surrealism Discussion

At 7pm Field Trip to Pastry Embarrassment performance by Sue Carman Vian

Good Cakes and Bakes
19363 Livernois Avenue
Detroit, MI 48221

Week 4: The Body (Performance, Fluxus, More awareness of the "self")

Week 5: Memory/Psychoanalysis (Pop Art, Commodity)

Week 6: The study of symbols, Semiotics. (Conceptualism, Land Art, Performance Art)

Week 7: Identity (Postmodernism in the 1980 and 1990's, Gender, Homosexuality, Race)

Week 8: Time (Video Art, Individualism, Globalization)

Week 9: Postmodern "We": The Artist and Society

Week 10: Re-presenting History (Representing the Unrepresented)

Week 11: Science/Technology

Week 12: Open Source & Interactivity

Week 13: Relational Art/Social Experience as Art/Ambient Art/Networking

Week 14: Contemporary Detroit Art

December 4- Last Day of Class

Week 15: Study and Finals

December 11- Final Due

FINAL Research Paper due in the Art Dept. Office 12/11 at 5pm.