Contemporary Issues in Art (ARH 3475C 001)
Meeting Time: M/W 11:50am-1:40pm
Classroom: FAH 290A
Instructor: Jong Chul Choi, Ph. D
Email and Phone: newcjc128@hotmail.com / 813-974-2360 (Art History Office)
Office hours and location: M/W 2:00-3:00pm, FAH 235
Teaching Assistant: Megan Voeller (mvoeller@mail.usf.edu)
Course Website: @Blackboard

Course Description and Objective:
This class offers a thematic overview of contemporary art and its historical background in global perspectives. Contemporary art is an endless venture in which the modern and pre-modern aesthetic/ideological certainty is challenged and negated. Motives for this challenge and negation cannot be summarized in a single term. Nevertheless, thematic approach can help us unleash the complexity of contemporary art in its clarity and efficiency. Chronologically, class discussions include artists and their practices made between 1980 and today. Methodologically, these discussions will be elaborated by sets of theoretical and philosophical discourses, presented in part by the instructor, and by students on their given presentation dates. As philosopher Arthur Danto remarked, the nature of contemporary art is philosophical, in that it raises an ontological question of what art is. In this regard, the objective of this class is to provide thematic articulations of the philosophical/theoretical nature of contemporary art that can help students have a better understanding of the diversity and complexity of recent art.

Student Outcome:
Students who successfully complete this course will:
- gain thematic understandings of the history, theory, and practice of contemporary art.
- appreciate multiple interpretations of artworks and be open minded in looking at art.
- be able to identify, analyze, and discuss artists and concepts associated with contemporary art practice through both written and verbal means.

Assignments and Grading:
- Method Presentation in group (groups will be assigned in the first week) (10%)
- Artist Lecture Report: two one-page-long lecture reviews (10%)
- Online discussion (10%)
- Midterm Exam (Wednesday October 17 at 12: 00 in the classroom) (30%)
- Final Exam (TBA: b/w December 8-14) (30%)
- Attendance/ Participation (10%)

Grading Scale
95-100 A ; 90-94 A- ; 87-89 B+ ; 84-86 B ; 80-83 B- ; 77-79 C+ ; 74-76 C ; 70-73 C- ; 67-69 D+ ; 64-66 D ; 60-63 D ; 0-59 E

Required textbook:

Recommended textbooks (on library reserve):
Course Details

Exams:
Students will take two exams (midterm and final) throughout the course. The midterm exam covers the first part of the course and the final entire course themes. The exam formats are as following:
Part 1 (Identification) - ID images with basic info (artists, titles, years, schools (or themes), etc.) and write a short, one-paragraph essay on the images
Part 2 (Comparison) - Compare/contrast on the given pairs of images
Part 3 (Essay) - Write an essay (two pages max) on the given essay topic

Student Presentation:
All students are expected to participate in at least one class presentation in group. It is a group presentation either about key methodological frameworks (formalism, structuralism, psychoanalysis, deconstruction, etc.) or about critical texts that will be discussed in class. Schedule and details will be announced in the class orientation. Laurie Adams’s *The Methodologies of Art: An Introduction* (Boulder, Colo: Westview Press, 1996) is a guiding text for the method presentation. Every student should be participating in one or more group activities; students who do not join the groups without a valid reason will be assigned with different duties (some point deduction may be considered).

Artist Lecture Report:
During the semester, students will attend to the lectures by visiting artists and scholars. There are the four Golding artist lectures and one Kennedy Scholar lecture on campus. All lectures are mandatory and students should write one-page response for at least two lectures scheduled below. Additional responses beyond the two required responses will lead to extra credits.

*Lecture schedule*
Thursday, September 20, 7 – 9 pm, Visiting Golding Artist Lecture, “Dead Reckoning,” Lisa Hamilton – FAH 101
Thursday, October 11,  7 – 9 pm, Kennedy Scholar in Residence Katherine Bussard Lecture “How and Why I Curate” – FAH 101
Wednesday, October 24, 6 – 8 pm, Visiting Golding Art Historian Lecture,”Wedded to Her Profession? Representing the Wife of Alexander Roslin,” Melissa Hyde – FAH 290
Thursday, November 1,  7 – 9 pm, Visiting Golding Artist Lecture, “O Trees, To Whom Sunlight is a Tattered, Pilgrim: Part II, The Slideshow,” Isak Applin& Carl Baretta – FAH 101
Thursday, November 15, 7 – 9 pm, Visiting Golding Artist Lecture,“Photographs, Past & Present,” David Hilliard – FAH 101

Online discussion:
Online discussion forum will be set up and updated regularly in the course website. Students are highly encouraged to visit frequently. Find the discussion topics posted online, and write short responses, or tag responses to the topics. This is another great opportunity to increase your class participation score.

Course Policies

- **Attendance and Absence**: Prompt attendance is required at all classes. Please check your schedule well in advance to see if you have any commitments (for example, religious holidays or extracurricular activities) that conflict with classes and due dates. Students who anticipate being absent from class due to religious observance should inform the instructor by the second class meeting of the term. (more than two absences will affect your final grade)
- **Makeup Exam and Late or Missed Assignment**: Last minute extensions, make-up tests, and incomplete grades will be granted only for extreme, unforeseeable or inevitable circumstances such as hospitalization or religious commitment.
- **Class Etiquette**: Use of cell phones, laptops, cameras, recording devices, etc. that are not relevant to the course is not allowed. Eating, except for the coffee, water and such, is not allowed during the class.

- **Academic Honesty**: Students are expected to follow the Academic Honesty Guidelines of the Institution. Cheating and plagiarism will not be tolerated and a report will be filed with the Judicial Affairs office. If you have any questions about the proper use and citation of sources, please ask an instructor.

- **Academic Accommodation**: Students in need of academic accommodations for a disability may consult with the Office of Students with Disabilities Services (SDS) to arrange appropriate accommodations. Students are required to give reasonable notice prior to requesting an accommodation.

- **Copyright Issues**: It is not permitted to sell class notes (both by students and by instructor) and PDF data to anybody who had nothing to do with this class.

### Class schedule

**August**

**M 8/27** Course Introduction

**W 8/29** Premises: Overview of Art History between the 1940s and the 1970s (Duchamp’s legacies, Rosenberg vs. Greenberg, The Crux of Minimalism, Beyond Art and Objecthood, Pop and the End of Art)

*Method presentation group announcement (presenting group/questioning group)*

**September**

**M 9/3** No class, Labor Day

**W 9/5** **Time: Concepts and Precursors**

Reading: Themes of Contemporary Art (TCA) pp. 33-67

Other useful references:


**M 9/10** **Time continued: Contemporary artists under the theme of Time**

Discussion: Ann Hamilton, Felix Gonzalez-Torres, On Kawara, David Hockney, Douglas Gordon …

**W 9/12** **Movement (Machine): Kinetic or Robotic Art**


Discussion: Arthur Ganson, U-Ram Choe, Roxy Paine …

**M 9/17** **Method presentation: Formalism (presenting group/questioning group: 1/7) and Clement Greenberg (2/8)**

**W 9/19** **Place: Concepts and Precursors**
Reading: TCA pp. 69-100
Other useful references:
Miwon Kwon, One Place After Another: Site-Specific Art and Locational Identity, (Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press, 2002)

M 9/24  Place continued: Contemporary artists under the theme of Place
Discussion: Richard Long, Robert Smithson, Gordon Matta-Clark, Christo and Jeanne-Claude, Andy Goldsworthy, Tadashi Kawamata …

W 9/26  Method presentation: Feminism (3/9) and Post-colonialism (4/10)

October
M 10/1  Identity: Concepts and Precursors
Reading: TCA pp. 103-127
Other useful references:

W 10/3  Identity continued: Contemporary artists under the theme of Identity
Discussion: Betye Saar, Mary Kelly, Rebecca Horn, Hannah Wilke, Kara Walker, Rotimi Fani-Kayode, Yinka Shonibare, Ellen Gallagher, Glenn Ligon, Shirin Neshat, Felix Gonzalez-Torres …

M 10/8  Method presentation: Psychoanalysis - Freud (5/11) and Lacan (6/12)

W 10/10  Body
Reading: TCA pp. 129-155
Other useful references:
Amelia Johns, Body Art: Performing the Subject, (Minneapolis: Univ. of Minneapolis Press, 1998)
Discussion: Louise Bourgeois, Yoko Ono, Carolee Schneemann, Vito Acconci, Vanessa Beecroft, Bill Viola, Miru Kim, Laurel Nakadate, Rona Pondick, Kiki Smith, Robert Gober, Paul McCarthy, Ron Mueck, …

M 10/15  Midterm exam review

W 10/17  Midterm exam

M 10/22  Method presentation: Structuralism (7/13) and Post-structuralism (8/14)

W 10/24  Language: Dematerialization of art and Conceptualism
Reading: TCA pp. 161-197
Other useful references:
Roland Barthes, The Death of Author, 1968

M 10/29
Method presentation: Deconstruction (9/1) and Postmodernism (10/2)

W 10/31
The Post: Postmodernism in art – the return of painting, trans avant-garde, appropriation, and neo-conceptualism
Readings (Optional):

November
M 11/5
Photography as a central medium in the post-medium era
Readings (Optional):
Michael Fried, Why Photography Matters As Art As Never Before (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008)
Discussion: Jeff Wall, Thomas Demand, Thomas Struth, Andreas Gursky, Thomas Ruff, Candid Hofer, Philp-Lorca diCorcia …

W 11/7
Method presentation: Marxism (11/3) and Neo-Marxism (12/4)

M 11/12
No class, Veteran’s day

W 11/14
History: The Archive
Readings (Optional):
Alan Gilbert, “Walid Raad (Re)invents The Archive,” Aperture no. 198 (Spring 2010).
Discussion: Christian Boltanski, The Atlas Group (Walid Raad), Aernout Mik, …

M 11/19
Ethics: Representing the Unrepresentable
Reading (Optional):
Discussion: Alfredo Jaar, Kevin Carter, Sabatiao Salgado, Andrea Serrano, Boris Mikhailov …

**W 11/21**
Film screening: *The Bang Bang Club* (Steven Silver, 2010)
*Artist Lecture Report Due*

**M 11/26**
Method presentation: Situationist International (13/5) and Relational Aesthetics (14/6)

**W 11/28**
Politics 1 (*Dystopia*): Art in the Age of War and Terrorism
Readings (Optional):
Benjamin Buchloh, “In what ways have artists, academics, and cultural institutions responded to the U.S.-led invasion and occupation of Iraq?” *October* 123 (Winter 2008).
Discussion: Luc Delahaye, Richard Mosse, Jim Goldberg, Juul Hondius, Mark Wallenger, Paul Chan, Dan Perjovschi …

**December**
**M 12/3**
Politics 2 (*Utopia*): Relational Aesthetics
Required Reading:
Optional Reading:
Claire Bishop, *Antagonism and Relational Aesthetics*, *October* 123 (Winter 2008)
Discussion: Rirkrit Tiravanija, Philippe Parreno, Felix Gonzalez-Torres, Dominique Gonzalez-Foerster, Liam Gillick, …

**W 12/5**
Final exam review

**TBA**
Final Exam