Introduction to Modern Art, Architecture, and Design

L01 215
Spring 2017

Prof. Ila N. Sheren
Kemper 216
isheren@wustl.edu
Office Hours: Wednesdays 12pm-1pm or by appointment

Lectures: Tuesday, Thursday 11:30am-1:00pm, Steinberg Auditorium
Discussion subsections (all in Kemper Art Museum, rooms below) and their TAs:

A: T, 4-5pm, Kemper 103 - Max Valsamas (m.valsamas@wustl.edu)
B: T, 5-6pm, Kemper 103 - Max Valsamas
C: W, 10-11am, Kemper 103 - Kate Harnish (kbharnish@wustl.edu)
D: W, 11-12am, Kemper 103 - Kate Harnish
E: W, 12-1pm, Kemper 103 - Orin Zahra (ozahra@wustl.edu)
F: W, 12-1pm, Kemper 211 - Anna Franklin (roni.franklin@wustl.edu)
G: W, 5:30-6:30pm, Kemper 103 - Orin Zahra
H: W, 5:30-6:30pm, Kemper 211 - Anna Franklin
I: R, 4-5pm, Kemper 103 - Lauren Johnson (lauren.johnson@wustl.edu)
J: R, 5-6pm, Kemper 103 - Lauren Johnson
K: F, 10-11am, Kemper 103 - Heather Read (read@wustl.edu)
J: F, 12-1pm, Kemper 103 - Heather Read

Course Description

The legacy of modernism - in the arts and visual culture, especially - is all around us. From this building in which you are sitting to the font you are reading, we find traces, subtle and overt, of this fascinating and hugely influential period in Western culture. But what was modernism, really? It was an era of rapid change and experimentation, punctuated by violent global conflict. On its surface, modernity was comprised of grand narratives, change and progress, although not always for the better. It was an era of multiple utopias, none of them realized. In art, modernism was a period of contradictions - liberation and expression, but also theoretical rigor and control. It was an age of manifestos, of grand designs that transcended divisions of medium and hierarchies of genre.

It would be impossible to cover every major artwork and event in the Modern canon, at least with any kind of depth. Instead, this course is structured around twenty-seven key
objects and events, one per lecture. Each key will function as a focal point for its lecture, and will give access to related areas of importance. Each lecture is also guided by a theme that will unify the various paths leading outward.

A note on chronology: the keys are roughly chronological. Weeks 3-7, however, all cover basically the same time period from the perspective of different movements and regions. I assure you, it will not seem nearly so complicated as it sounds. At times, keys may seem out of order, but in those cases the content of the lectures fits better with the overall chronology. In any event, think of this course as both thematic and chronological, with compromises made for clarity.

Assignments and Grading
You must complete all assignments to receive a grade for the course. As per the department’s policy, pass/fail students must complete all assignments to receive credit, even if you might technically pass without one. The grading breakdown is listed below:

- Attendance & Participation: 10%
- Paper #1: 15%
- Paper #2: 15%
- Paper #3: 15%
- Midterm Exam: 20%
- Final Exam: 25%

Attendance and Participation
Attendance in section is mandatory. There are only seven section meetings, so plan your lives accordingly. You must attend the section in which you are enrolled. Absence due to illness may be excused with a doctor’s note. If you need to attend a different section one week for religious or medical reasons, make arrangements with your TA.

Participation in section is also mandatory, and there will be ample opportunity to participate. Your TA will go over what constitutes constructive participation in more detail later.

There has been much talk of “safe space” in the media lately, so let me clarify: this classroom is a safe space. You will not be marginalized, belittled, or otherwise shut down for your comments, questions, and responses. This does not mean that you cannot express your opinion if it differs from someone else’s, but that we can all converse in a civilized manner, not like a YouTube comment section.

Here’s the University statement on Inclusive Learning Environments:
The best learning environment—whether in the classroom, studio, laboratory, or fieldwork site—is one in which all members feel respected while being productively challenged. At Washington University in St. Louis, we are dedicated to fostering an inclusive atmosphere, in which all participants can contribute, explore, and challenge their own ideas as well as those of others. Every participant has an active responsibility to foster a climate of intellectual stimulation, openness, and respect for diverse perspectives, questions, personal backgrounds, abilities, and experiences, although instructors bear primary responsibility for its maintenance.

A range of resources is available to those who perceive a learning environment as lacking inclusivity, as defined in the preceding paragraph. If possible, we encourage students to speak directly with their instructor or TA about any suggestions or concerns they have regarding a particular instructional space or situation. Alternatively, students may bring concerns to another trusted advisor or administrator (such as an academic advisor, mentor, department chair, or dean). All classroom participants—including faculty, staff, and students—who observe a bias incident affecting a student may also file a report (whether personally or anonymously) utilizing the online Bias Report and Support System.

Exams
A midterm exam will be held in class on March 9. The final exam will take place on May 8, 1-3pm, also in Steinberg Auditorium. Only in the most extreme of extenuating circumstances can an exam be rescheduled or made up. Plan your lives accordingly. If you have a Cornerstone VISA, give it to your TA sooner rather than later, and alternate arrangements will be made.

Readings
Readings are to be read by the date that they appear on the syllabus. They can be found on Ares or in the texts that are required for purchase.

The following books will be available on Amazon or wherever else books are sold. In addition, a copy of each will be placed on reserve at the Art Library.

- **Art in Modern Culture, ed. Francis Frascina.** (Phaidon Press, 1994).
A note: Art Since 1900 is a supplemental text that will give you a strong chronological sense of the material. It is highly recommended, and will give you more of a “survey” feel than the course may. These readings will not be discussed in class or section, so it is entirely up to you whether or not you purchase the text. Art in Theory, on the other hand, WILL comprise many of your reading assignments.

On the syllabus, Art Since 1900 will be abbreviated AS1900, Art in Theory will be abbreviated AiT, and Art in Modern Culture AMC.

Bibliography:
Chandler, Annmarie, “Animating the Social: Mobile Image/Kit Galloway and Sherrie Rabinowitz” in At a distance: precursors to art and activism on the Internet / edited by Annmarie Chandler and Norie Neumark
Golan, Romy, “Triangulating the Surrealist Fetish” Visual Anthropology Review 10, 50-65
Howard, Ebenezer, Garden Cities of To-Morrow (Second Edition of “To-morrow: A Peaceful Path to Real Reform”) (1902).
Mitchell, W.J.T. Landscape and Power
Stallabrass, Julian, High Art Lite: The Rise and Fall of Young British Art, revised and expanded edition (Verso, 2006; 1999)
Steinberg, Leo, Other Criteria: Confrontations with Twentieth-Century Art (Oxford University Press, 1975).
Turner, Fred. From Counterculture to Cyberculture: Stewart Brand, the Whole Earth Network,
and the Rise of Digital Utopianism
Vertov, Dziga (dir.), Man With A Movie Camera (1925).

Policies

Academic Integrity
When you use the work of others, cite it! Failure to do so is intellectual theft. If you need more of a definition, here’s Wikipedia: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Plagiarism. There is zero tolerance for plagiarism in this course. Any case of plagiarism will be sent to the Dean, and their office will make a binding decision. A second offense will result in a failing grade for the term.
Please refer to the Washington University policy on academic integrity (http://wustl.edu/policies/undergraduate-academic-integrity.html).

If you are uncertain as to whether something constitutes plagiarism, ask! In this case, it is far better to ask permission than forgiveness.

Cellphones, Tablets and other Electronic Devices
No, nope, no. If you have a problem with this, blame the generations of students before you who couldn’t use their devices for note taking only. If you have a Cornerstone VISA that requires that you use a computer for note taking, talk to me about it, and accommodations will be made.

Food & Beverages (other than water):
You may eat or drink in lecture as long as it isn’t distracting. The rules for section are up to each individual TA.

University Resources:

1. DISABILITY RESOURCES: If you have a disability that requires an accommodation, please speak with instructor and consult the Disability Resource Center at Cornerstone (cornerstone.wustl.edu/). Cornerstone staff will determine appropriate accommodations and will work with your instructor to make sure these are available to you.

2. WRITING ASSISTANCE: For additional help on your writing, consult the expert staff of The Writing Center (writingcenter.wustl.edu) in Olin Library (first floor). It can be
enormously helpful to ask someone outside a course to read your essays and to provide feedback on strength of argument, clarity, organization, etc. < The Engineering Communication Center http://engineering.wustl.edu/current-students/student-services/Pages/default.aspx offers students in the School of Engineering and Applied Sciences help with oral presentations, writing assignments, and other communications projects, as well as job-search documents such as resumes and cover letters.>

3. THE UNIVERSITY’S PREFERRED NAME POLICY FOR STUDENTS, with additional resources and information, may be found here: registrar.wustl.edu/student-records/ssn-name-changes/preferred-name-policy/preferred-name-policy-student/ .

4. SEXUAL ASSAULT: The University is committed to offering reasonable academic accommodations to students who are victims of sexual assault. Students are eligible for accommodation regardless of whether they seek criminal or disciplinary action. Depending on the specific nature of the allegation, such measures may include but are not limited to: implementation of a no-contact order, course/classroom assignment changes, and other academic support services and accommodations. If you need to request such accommodations, please direct your request to Kim Webb (kim_webb@wustl.edu ), Director of the Relationship and Sexual Violence Prevention Center. Ms. Webb is a confidential resource; however, requests for accommodations will be shared with the appropriate University administration and faculty. The University will maintain as confidential any accommodations or protective measures provided to an individual student so long as it does not impair the ability to provide such measures. SEXUAL ASSAULT REPORTING: If a student comes to me to discuss or disclose an instance of sexual assault, sex discrimination, sexual harassment, dating violence, domestic violence or stalking, or if I otherwise observe or become aware of such an allegation, I will keep the information as private as I can, but as a faculty member of Washington University, I am required to immediately report it to my Department Chair or Dean or directly to Ms. Jessica Kennedy, the University’s Title IX Coordinator. If you would like to speak with the Title IX Coordinator directly, Ms. Kennedy can be reached at (314) 935-3118, jwkennedy@wustl.edu, or by visiting her office in the Women’s Building. Additionally, you can report incidents or complaints to Tamara King, Associate Dean for Students and Director of Student Conduct, or by contacting WUPD at (314) 935-5555 or your local law enforcement agency. You can also speak confidentially and learn more about available resources at the Relationship and Sexual Violence Prevention Center by calling (314) 935-8761 or visiting the 4th floor of Seigle Hall.

5. BIAS REPORTING: The University has a process through which students, faculty, staff and community members who have experienced or witnessed incidents of bias,
prejudice or discrimination against a student can report their experiences to the University’s Bias Report and Support System (BRSS) team. See: brss.wustl.edu

6. MENTAL HEALTH: Mental Health Services’ professional staff members work with students to resolve personal and interpersonal difficulties, many of which can affect the academic experience. These include conflicts with or worry about friends or family, concerns about eating or drinking patterns, and feelings of anxiety and depression. See: shs.wustl.edu/MentalHealth

A Note on Triggers:
This is a course that deals with visual art. Specifically, modern (and contemporary) art. There will be nudity, pornography, violence, allusions to sexual violence, suicide, graphic imagery, strobing/flashing lights, and possibly other triggers that I haven’t even thought of. Consider this a blanket trigger warning for the entire course. In addition, I will do my best to give specific warnings when warranted, and you are welcome to slip out the door or put your head down either before or during a given artwork if you need to.

However - I would like to distinguish between a psychological trigger and sensitivity/squeamishness. Some of the artworks we will see in class are contingent on their shock value, the emotional affect that they engender in the viewer. I will do my best to moderate between providing appropriate warnings and letting you experience the art as it was intended. Ultimately, you know yourself best: if you are still working through some kind of trauma and are hesitant about the course, you may discuss this with me in private to see if this is a class that you should take.
Schedule

WEEK 1


WEEK 2


Paper #1 Assigned

January 26: Ornament: Alphonse Mucha, *Posters for Moët & Chandon* (1899)

Section Meeting 1: John Berger, *Ways of Seeing*
WEEK 3

January 31: Time: Lumiere Brothers First Films (1895)

February 2: Multi-dimensional: Pablo Picasso, Les Demoiselles d’Avignon (1907)

WEEK 4

February 7: Progress: Umberto Boccioni, Unique Forms of Continuity in Space (1913)

February 9: Geometry: Gerrit Rietveld, Red-Blue Chair (1917-18)

Section Meeting 2: Prints, Photographs and Drawings.
WEEK 5

February 14: Spirituality: Bruno Taut, Glass Pavilion (1913)


February 16: Control: Mies van der Rohe, Barcelona Pavilion (1929)


WEEK 6

February 21: Man/Machine: Marcel Duchamp, The Bride Stripped Bare By Her Bachelors, Even (1915-1923)


February 23: Fetish: Méret Oppenheim, Object (Breakfast in Fur) (1936)


***Paper #1 Due this week***
WEEK 7

February 28: Multiplicity: Claude Cahun, *What do you want from me?* (1928)

Readings: Walter Benjamin, “the work of art in the age of mechanical reproduction,” (1931); *AS1900 258-262.*

Paper #2 Assigned.

March 2: Montage: Dziga Vertov, *Man With A Movie Camera* (1929)
Film: *Man With a Movie Camera* available on YouTube: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7ZkvjWIEcoU](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7ZkvjWIEcoU) (the one with the Alloy Orchestra score)


WEEK 8

March 7: Landscape: Georgia O’Keeffe, *Ram’s Head White Hollyhock and Little Hills* (1935)
AND Midterm Exam Info Session


March 9: Midterm Exam, in class

Spring Break: March 13-17
WEEK 9

March 21: Gesture: Jackson Pollock, *Autumn Rhythm (Number 30)* (1950)

Readings: Gottlieb et al “Statement” *AiT* 568-569; Rothko, “The Romantics were Prompted…” *AiT* 571-573; *AS1900* 400-405.


WEEK 10


***Paper #2 Due***


Section Meeting 5: Rosalyn Drexler Exhibition (Kemper). Reading: selection from the Drexler catalogue, TBD.
WEEK 11


WEEK 12


***Paper #3 Assigned***


Section Meeting 6: Feminism? Carol Duncan, “Virility and Domination.”
WEEK 13

April 18: Communication: Mobile Image (Kit Galloway and Sherrie Rabinowitz), Hole in Space (1980)
Annmarie Chandler, “Animating the Social: Mobile Image/Kit Galloway and Sherrie Rabinowitz” in At a distance : precursors to art and activism on the Internet / edited by Annmarie Chandler and Norie Neumark. 152-175.

Readings: James Davison Hunter, “Cultural Conflict in America” and “Media and the Arts” in Culture Wars: The Struggle to Define America, pp 31-51, 225-249; AS1900 589-592, 668-673.

WEEK 14

Readings: Julian Stallabrass, “Famous for Being Famous” and “Saatchi and Sensation” in High Art Lite: The Rise and Fall of Young British Art, 17-49, 204-233.


Final Section Meeting: Debating the role of the market and the determination of value. Don Thompson, The $12 Million Stuffed Shark: The Curious Economics of Contemporary Art, 1-17.

Paper #3 Due Friday April 28.

Final Exam: May 8, 2017 1pm-3pm, Steinberg Auditorium