TWENTIETH-CENTURY ART: 1945-2000

After the second World War, the center of the art world shifted from Paris to New York. This course will consider the provocative, contentious, and complex art made during the second half of the twentieth century. A few of the themes we will consider are the advent of postmodernism, the rise of kitsch, the increasing politicization of the artist, the inclusion of the body in art-making, the emergence of site-specificity, and the spaces in which art is produced and viewed.

COURSE SCHEDULE

September 8 – Introduction

September 15 – Abstract Expressionism (Action Painting and Color Field Painting) and Sculpture
- Suggested Reading: Fineberg 67-128.

September 22 – Johns, Rauschenberg, and Pop Art
- Reading: Leo Steinberg, “The Flatbed Picture Plane” (excerpt) and “Jasper Johns: The First Seven Years of His Art,” Other Criteria: Confrontations with Twentieth-Century Art (London: Oxford University Press, 1972) 82-91 and 17-54.
- Suggested Reading: Fineberg 172-187, 206-221, 237-266.
September 29 – Post-Painterly Abstraction and Minimalism
- Suggested Reading: Fineberg 294-310.

October 6 – Happenings, Nouveaux Réalisme, and Fluxus
- Research Paper Proposal Due
- Suggested Reading: Fineberg 188-206, 222-236.

October 13 – Postmodernism, Conceptual Art, and Process Art
- Suggested Reading: Fineberg 311-323, 338-346.

October 20 – Site Sculpture and Earthworks
October 27 – Performance Art and Video
- Annotated Bibliography Due
- Suggested Reading: Fineberg 346-354.

November 3 – Midterm

November 10 – Critiquing Culture

November 17 – Painting (again), Sculpture, and Photography

November 24 – No Class—Thanksgiving Break

December 1 – Appropriation, Simulation, and the Return of the Real
- Readings: To be announced.

December 8 – Public Engagement
- Research Paper Due
- Reading: Robert Storr, “‘Tilted Arc’: Enemy of the People?,” *Art in America* 73.9 (September 1985): 90-97.
December 15 – Final Exam
COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Your final grade will be determined according to the following criteria:

Class Participation and Presentations (20%): Each lecture will explore themes, concepts, and content from the readings, and I will expect you to come to class prepared to discuss them. In addition, over the course of the semester, each student will be assigned one reading to present to the class. The presentation must include a brief biography of the author and a summary of the article, after which the student will lead discussion of the reading for approximately fifteen minutes.

Research Paper (30%): You will be responsible for writing an 8-10 page research paper on an appropriate work in the Philadelphia Museum of Art or in the city of Philadelphia. A two-page proposal will be due on October 6th (5%), which I have to approve, an annotated bibliography will be due on October 27th (5%), and the paper will be due on the last day of class, December 8th (20%). Each of these steps will be discussed in more detail as the semester progresses.

Midterm and Final Exams (each 25%): The exams will consist of slide comparisons and essays. The images shown and discussed in class will be available on the Blackboard site for this class.

Please note:

Office Hours: I will be very happy to meet with you for any reason. Office hours will be by appointment only; please contact me at natashar@sas.upenn.edu.

Readings: The readings are an essential component of this course; therefore, you should make sure to bring a copy of the readings to every class. Readings are drawn from a number of sources and are available:
- online at the Blackboard site for this class;
- for purchase in a bulk pack at Campus Copy (3907 Walnut Street, 215.386.6410);
- and individually as “pamphlets” at the Reserve Desk at the Fisher Fine Arts Library.

The only required text is Jonathan Fineberg’s *Art Since 1940: Strategies of Being* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, Inc., 1995), which can be purchased at the Penn Book Center at the corner of Sansom and 34th Streets. The book will serve as a resource for you when preparing for class, studying for exams, and working on your research paper. There will also be weekly suggested readings.

Late Papers: Late papers will be marked down one grade per day. If you anticipate problems turning in your paper on time, you must contact me at least one week before the due date; I will grant extensions only in extreme circumstances.

Attendance: Faithful attendance is required to pass this class. Only one excused absence is allowed; your participation grade will decrease with each additional absence.

Plagiarism: Plagiarism constitutes an automatic failure for the course and will be reported to the Office of Student Conduct immediately.