

CONTEMPORARY ART

HART 293 – SPRING 2024

Instructor:	Sander Oosterom
Teaching Assistant:	Berrak Gülođlu Meryem Yilmaz
Class Day and Hours:	Tuesday 9.40- 12.30, lecture at FASS 1076-78
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Important Note: This syllabus may be subject to change. It is the student's responsibility to follow announcements and e-mails regarding all issues related to this course.

Course Description:

The understanding and appreciation of contemporary art is often beset by challenges for the uninitiated. The aim of this course is to offer the student some anchor points for a better comprehension of the art since the 1960s. Discussing the demise of Modernism in the 1960s, the onset of Postmodernism in the 1970s and 80s, and the emergence of contemporary art around the turn of the century, the course will first follow a chronological approach, leading up to the postmodern era before the midterm. After the midterm, we will continue , exploring some of the major themes and topics that dominated postmodern and contemporary art over the past few decades.

Prerequisites:

The course is open to all students. Although no previous exposure to the history of art is assumed, some interest in and familiarity with modern and contemporary art will be beneficial.

Grading:

Your letter grade as well as exam grades are based on your individual performance and are not negotiable. The breakdown of the final grade is as follows:

- Attendance (10%) and active participation (10%);
- Several unannounced quizzes (10%);
- A midterm exam (30%); and
- A final exam (40%).

Attendance:

Attendance is compulsory in this course, starting at the end of the add-drop period. Failure to attend more than one class requires points to be taken off the overall grade. Students who miss more than four classes in total will automatically receive a N/A standing for this course. Participation will be assessed in accordance with the student's overall participation in the course, their engagement with the course material and their contribution to the discussion sections in class. The extensive use of phones or sleeping in class will immediately impact the student's participation score.

Course material:

In this course, we will be mainly working with two textbooks: David Hopkins, *After Modern Art: 1945-2017*, Oxford University Press, 2018 and Irving Sandler, *Art of the Postmodern Era, From The Late 1960s To The Early 1990s*, HarperCollins, 1996. On top of this, the student is expected to read additional literature on specific topics and watch films or documentaries in preparation for the discussion sections on a weekly basis. All required course material will be uploaded to SUCourse. Please note that all the reading material is in English. You are free to use Turkish translations if available but be aware that the English texts as uploaded on SUCourse will be used in class.

Students with Special Needs:

It is the policy of Sabancı University to accommodate students with special needs and disabilities. To determine accommodations and/or academic adjustments, please let us know and contact the Disabled Students Support Unit of CIAD (specialneeds@sabanciuniv.edu).

Anti-Discrimination Policy:

The classroom is free from all discrimination based on, including but not limited to, race, ethnicity, creed, religion, language, disability, gender, and sexual orientation. Students are expected to maintain this environment.

Course Content and Structure:

Every class consists of a two-hour seminar in which we concentrate on one important theme within the field of contemporary art, discuss the required course material for that week, and eventually zoom in on the work of one contemporary artist that reflects the theme under discussion. Although these two-hour seminars will mostly take the shape of a lecture, I always invite the student's participation and engagement. The last hour of class will be dedicated to a discussion of the course material for which active participation is expected and required.

Course Content and Weekly Schedule

Week	Date	Subject
1	11-02-2025	<p>Introduction: What is Contemporary Art?</p> <p>To Read:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Irving Sandler, "Introduction," in <i>Art of the Postmodern Era: From the Late 1960s to the Early 1990s</i>, pp. 1-20. - Peter Osborne, "Chapter 1. The fiction of the contemporary," in <i>Anywhere Or Not at All: Philosophy of Contemporary Art</i>, pp. 15-35. (pp. 28-35 optional). <p>To Watch:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Square, directed by Ruben Östlund, 2017.
2	18-02-2025	<p>Modernism in Context</p> <p>To Read:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - David Hopkins, "Chapter 1. The Politics of Modernism: Abstract Expressionism and the European Informel," in <i>After Modern Art: 1945-2017</i>, pp. 5-33. - Clement Greenberg, "Avant-Garde and Kitsch," in <i>Art and Culture: Critical Essays</i>, pp. 3-21. <p>To Watch:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Jackson Pollock, directed by Kim Evans, 1987.
3	25-02-2025	<p>Challenging Modernism: The Legacy of Duchamp</p> <p>To Read:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - David Hopkins, "Chapter 2. Duchamp's Legacy: The Rauschenberg—Johns Axis," in <i>After Modern Art: 1945-2017</i>, pp. 35-61. - Leo Steinberg, "Other Criteria," in <i>Other Criteria: Confrontations with Twentieth-Century Art</i>, pp. 55-91. <p>To Watch:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Robert Rauschenberg: Pop Art Pioneer, BBC Documentary, 2016.
4	04-03-2025	<p>The Death of the Artist?</p> <p>To Read:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - David Hopkins, "Chapter 3. The Artist in Crisis: From Bacon to Beuys," in <i>After Modern Art: 1945-2017</i>, pp. 63-87. - Roland Barthes, "The Death of the Author," in <i>Image, Music, Text</i>, pp. 142-148. - Benjamin H.D. Buchloh, "Beuys: The Twilight of the Idol," <i>Artforum</i> 18, no 5, pp. 35-43. <p>To Watch:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Beuys</i>, directed by Andreas Veiel, 2017.

5	11-03-2025	<p>From High to Low and Back Again: Art and Popular Culture</p> <p>To Read:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - David Hopkins, "Chapter 4. Blurring Boundaries: Pop Art, Fluxus, and their Effects," in <i>After Modern Art: 1945-2017</i>, pp. 89-119. - Thomas Crow, "Showdown on East Forty-Seventh / Bob Dylan and Andy Warhol," in <i>The Long March of Pop</i>, pp. 271-312. <p>To Watch:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Andy Warhol: A Documentary Film, directed by Ric Burns, 2006.
6	18-03-2025	<p>Minimalism and Postminimalism: Art Beyond the Frame</p> <p>To Read:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Irving Sandler, "Chapter 1. Postminimalism," in <i>Art of the Postmodern Era</i>, pp. 21-70. - David Hopkins, "Chapter 5. Modernism in Retreat: Minimalist Aesthetics and Beyond," in <i>After Modern Art: 1945-2017</i>, pp. 121-28 & 131-37. - Michael Fried, "Art and Objecthood" in <i>Art and Objecthood: Essays and Reviews</i>, pp. 148-172. <p>To Watch:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Eva Hesse</i>, directed by Marcie Begleiter, 2016.
7	25-03-2025	<p>From Dematerialization to Institutional Critique: The Birth of Conceptual Art</p> <p>To Read:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - David Hopkins, "Chapter 6. The Death of the Object: The Move to Conceptualism," in <i>After Modern Art: 1945-2017</i>, pp. 148-180. - Lucy Lippard and John Chandler, "The Dematerialization of Art," in <i>Changing Essays in Art Criticism</i>, pp. 255-60. - Lucy Lippard, "Postface," in <i>Six Years: The Dematerialization of the Art Object</i>, pp. 263-64. <p>To Watch:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>All the Beauty and the Bloodshed</i>, directed by Laura Poitras, 2022.
	01-04-2025	Spring Break
8	08-04-2025	MIDTERM EXAM
9	15-04-2025	<p>Trends in Postmodern and Contemporary Art</p> <p>To Read:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Jean Robertson & Craig McDaniel, "Introduction," and "Chapter 1. The world changes, the art world expands," in <i>Themes of Contemporary Art: Visual Art After 1980</i>, pp. <p>To Watch:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Episode III: Enjoy Poverty, directed by Renzo Martens, 2008.
10	22-04-2025	<p>Themes in Contemporary Art I: The Death and Rebirth of Painting</p> <p>To Read:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Benjamin H.D. Buchloh, "Forces of Authority, Ciphers of Regression: Notes on the Return of Representation in European Painting," <i>October</i> 16, pp. 39-68. <p>To Watch:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Anselm</i>, directed by Wim Wenders, 2023.

11	29-04-2025	<p>Themes in Contemporary Art II: Identity and the Body</p> <p>To Read:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Jean Robertson & Craig McDaniel, “Chapter 2. Identity” & Chapter 3. Body,” in <i>Themes of Contemporary Art: Visual Art After 1980</i>, pp. - L. Nochlin, “Why Have There Been No Great Women Artists?” in <i>Women, Art, and Power and Other Essays</i>, pp. 145-178. <p>To Watch:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>!Women Art Revolution</i>, directed by Lynn Hershman Leeson, 2010.
12	06-05-2025	<p>Themes in Contemporary Art III: Time and Memory</p> <p>To Read:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Jean Robertson & Craig McDaniel, “Chapter 4. Time” & Chapter 5. Memory,” in <i>Themes of Contemporary Art: Visual Art After 1980</i>, pp <p>To Watch:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Andy Goldsworthy: Working with Time</i>, directed by Thomas Riedelsheimer, 2001.
13	13-05-2025	<p>Themes in Contemporary Art IV: Space and Language</p> <p>To Read:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Jean Robertson & Craig McDaniel, “Chapter 6. Space” & Chapter 7. Language,” in <i>Themes of Contemporary Art: Visual Art After 1980</i>, pp. <p>To Watch:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Waste Land</i>, directed by Fernando Meirelles, 2010.
14	20-05-2025	<p>Themes in Contemporary Art V – Science and Spirituality</p> <p>To Read:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Jean Robertson & Craig McDaniel, “Chapter 8. Science” & Chapter 9. Spirituality,” in <i>Themes of Contemporary Art: Visual Art After 1980</i>, pp <p>To Watch:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Bill Viola: The Road to Saint Paul’s</i>, directed by Gerald Fox, 2017.