Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi  
DEPARTMENT OF ART  
Fall 2014  

ARTS 4390.001 Topics in Art  
Global Currents in Contemporary Art  

Course description:  
The course will cover key developments in contemporary art from the post-World War II era in the Western context to global currents in the present international arena. From a socio-political perspective, artistic tendencies will be considered as part of a trajectory that saw the center of the art world shift from being Euro- and Anglo-centric in the mid-twentieth century, to one without a discernible center in the early twenty-first century. Analysis of artworks from this decentralized cultural climate will focus on the evolution of conceptualism, the persistence of traditional modes of aesthetic practice, the role of the art market, and notions of environmentalism and sustainability as related to these ‘transnational transitions.’ The course will consider works from Eastern Europe, South and Central America, the Caribbean, East/West/South/Southeast Asia, Oceania, and Africa.

Instructor:        Professor Dr. Laura Petican  
Lecture times:    Mondays/Wednesdays, 3:30pm-4:45pm  
Location:        CS 103  
Office:          CA 208  
Office hours:    Mondays/Wednesdays, 2:00pm-3:00pm  
Telephone:       361-825-5752  
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Required text:  

Recommended texts:  


Evaluation:  
Reading Response: 5%  
Group Research Presentation: 20%  
Research Paper: 20%  
Midterm Exam: 20%  
Final Exam: 20%  
Participation: 15%
Reading Response: 5%  Due: Wednesday, September 3
Each student will write a 500-word response to an assigned reading. The purpose of this exercise is to engage students at the outset of the course with dominant themes and conceptual motifs that will be explored at length in subsequent class discussions. The response must contain a summary of the main argument of the reading, a discussion of one key idea outlined in the text, and must pose 1-2 questions related to the text that will be discussed in class. Your response to the text may be articulated, for example, in terms of agreement or disagreement with the author’s perspective, or it may identify limitations or particular strengths within the argument, and should be supported with examples.

Mid-term Exam: 20%  Wednesday, October 15
The mid-term exam will cover material from Weeks 1-7, inclusively. The exam will be comprised of slide identification, short answer, and essay-style questions.

Final Exam: 20%  TBD
The final exam will cover material from Weeks 8-15, inclusively. The exams will be comprised of slide identification, short answer, and essay-style questions.

Group Research Presentation: 20%
Each group will lead a class discussion on a pre-determined topic related to the larger themes of the course. The group presentations will address key movements, artists, and artworks in connection with the assigned reading and will relate these topics to the broader scope of contemporary socio-cultural developments. All members of the group must participate equally in the preparation and delivery of the presentation, as well as in the following class discussion. Each group member must speak for approximately 15 minutes. The group must prepare 3-4 questions that will generate class discussion following the presentation and which focus on issues raised by artworks discussed in connection with the corresponding reading. This discussion should last approximately 10 minutes. As a means of orientation, the presenting group will distribute a one-page handout to each class member that outlines the main themes and concepts addressed. Presentations will be graded according to the group’s general management of the presentation in terms of timing and distribution of work, the group’s ability to communicate their topic clearly and concisely to the class, its capacity to draw connections between artworks and the assigned reading, the clarity and relevance of the handout, and the quality of questions formulated and discussion generated.

Research Paper: 20%  Due: Monday, December 1
The Research Paper will articulate the thesis presented in your Research Paper Proposal according to the critical rationale and methodology outlined. Research Papers must be between 2000-2500 words (approximately 8-10 pages) in length and accompanied by a List of Figures, images of artworks discussed, and a complete bibliography of all works cited. All documents must follow Chicago Style guidelines. Research Papers will be graded according to the clarity of your argument, your ability to synthesize both visual and literary sources, the level of engagement with critical socio-cultural issues related to the course, and the strength of your thesis with respect to examples and evidence provided.

Participation: 15%
Students are required to attend class each week with assigned readings completed and prepared to engage in discussion related to lecture topics. The participation mark is formulated according to the extent and quality of your engagement in class discussions, including those following group presentations. Please be aware that missing more than 15% of classes may result in the student being barred from submitting the final paper.
WEEKLY LECTURE SCHEDULE

Week 1
Wednesday, August 27 – Introduction

Week 2
Monday, September 1
General Introduction. Contemporary Art in Transition: From Late Modern Art to Now; pp. 8-13
Late Modern Art Becomes Contemporary; pp. 16-27
Wednesday, September 3
Late Modern Art Becomes Contemporary, continued; pp. 27-43

Reading Response due (Wednesday, September 3): 5%

Week 3
Monday, September 8
The Contemporary Art Boom; pp. 44-58
Wednesday, September 10
The Contemporary Art Boom, continued; pp. 58-79

Week 4
Monday, September 15
The Transnational Transition; p. 82
Russia and (East of) Europe; pp. 84-105
Wednesday, September 17
Russia and (East of) Europe, continued; pp. 105-115

Week 5
Monday, September 22
South and Central America, The Caribbean; pp. 116-133
Wednesday, September 24
South and Central America, The Caribbean, continued; pp. 134-149

Week 6
Monday, September 29
China and East Asia; pp. 150-160
Wednesday, October 1
China and East Asia, continued; pp. 162-173

Week 7
Monday, October 6
India, South and Southeast Asia; pp. 174-185
Wednesday, October 8
India, South and Southeast Asia, continued; pp. 185-195

Week 8
Monday, October 13
Review class
Wednesday, October 15
Mid-term Exam: 20%
Week 9
Monday, October 20  
Oceania, pp. 196-213  
Wednesday, October 22  
The ‘Stateless’ Artist: 2Fik, Brendan Fernandes, Guillermo Gomez-Peña and James Luna

Week 10
Monday, October 27  
Africa; pp. 214-227  
Wednesday, October 29  
Africa, continued; pp. 227-235

Week 11
Monday, November 3  
West Asia; pp. 236-245  
Wednesday, November 5  
West Asia, continued; pp. 245-253

Week 12
Monday, November 10  
Contemporary Concerns: Introduction; pp. 256-257  
World Pictures: Making Art Politically; pp. 258-264  
Wednesday, November 12  
World Pictures: Making Art Politically, continued; pp. 264-273

Week 13
Monday, November 17  
Wednesday, November 19  

Week 14
Monday, November 24  
Social Media: Affects of Time; pp. 296-315  
Wednesday, November 26  
Coda: Permanent Transition; pp. 316-325

Week 15
Monday, December 1  
Review class

Research Papers due (Monday, December 1): 20%

Final Exam (TBD): 20%
COURSE POLICIES

Submission of Work

Only typed hard copies of written assignments will be accepted. Hand-written documents, e-mail submissions, and files saved to disks will not be accepted.

Late Policy

Students with special needs should consult the professor before the assignment due dates. Late assignments will be penalized except in the case of documented medical or other emergency. Penalties are as follows: 2% per day for the first five days, 5% per day thereafter. After ten days, late assignments will not be accepted.

Attendance and Tardiness

Consistent attendance is mandatory. Any unexcused absences will be subject to a 3% penalty in the student’s final grade in the course. Unexcused tardiness will be reflected in the student’s participation grade. Absences will only be excused upon presentation of official medical and/or emergency documentation.

Statement of Civility

Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi has a diverse student population that represents the population of the state. Our goal is to provide you with a high quality educational experience that is free from repression. You are responsible for following the rules of the University, city, state and federal government. We expect that you will behave in a manner that is dignified, respectful and courteous to all people, regardless of sex, ethnic/racial origin, religious background, sexual orientation or disability. Behaviors that infringe on the rights of another individual will not be tolerated.

Academic Integrity/Plagiarism

University students are expected to conduct themselves in accordance with the highest standards of academic honesty. Academic misconduct for which a student is subject to penalty includes all forms of cheating, such as illicit possession of examinations or examination materials, falsification, forgery, complicity or plagiarism. (Plagiarism is the presentation of the work of another as one’s own work.) In this class, academic misconduct or complicity in an act of academic misconduct on an assignment or test will result in a failing grade on that assignment.

Academic Advising

The College of Liberal Arts requires that students meet with an Academic Advisor as soon as they are ready to declare a major. The Academic Advisor will set up a degree plan, which must be signed by the student, a faculty mentor, and the department chair. The College’s Academic Advising Center is located in Driftwood 203E, and can be reached at 825-3466.
Grade Appeals

As stated in University Procedure 13.02.99.C2.01, Student Grade Appeal Procedures, a student who believes that he or she has not been held to appropriate academic standards as outlined in the class syllabus, equitable evaluation procedures, or appropriate grading, may appeal the final grade given in the course. The burden of proof is upon the student to demonstrate the appropriateness of the appeal. A student with a complaint about a grade is encouraged to first discuss the matter with the instructor. For complete details, including the responsibilities of the parties involved in the process and the number of days allowed for completing the steps in the process, see University Procedure 13.02.99.C2.01, Student Grade Appeal Procedures. These documents are accessible through the University Rules Web site at http://www.tamucc.edu/provost/university_rules/index.html. For assistance and/or guidance in the grade appeal process, students may contact the Dean’s office in the college in which the course is taught or the Office of the Provost.

Disabilities Accommodations

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you believe you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please call or visit Disability Services at (361) 825-5816 in Corpus Christi Hall 116.

If you are a returning veteran and are experiencing cognitive and/or physical access issues in the classroom or on campus, please contact the Disability Services office for assistance at (361) 825-5816.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

1. Re: Depth and Breadth of Knowledge
   Students will have a thorough knowledge of the key critical and theoretical frameworks that pertain to the period being studied and will be able to engage with/analyze works of art from that period according to those frameworks

2. Re: Knowledge of Methodologies
   Students will acquire the discursive/theoretical vocabularies that are utilized in debates within the field, and will demonstrate their knowledge of the field through the deployment of the vocabulary orally and in writing

3. Re: Application of Knowledge
   Students will utilize their knowledge of appropriate methods, the vocabularies pertinent to the field, and their ability to make appropriate judgements, in order to develop a sound argument regarding a particular historical development, and will be able to defend their argument according to knowledge of scholarly works

4. Re: Communication Skills
   Students will be able to communicate orally and in writing with regard to their art history research, and will be able to utilize different genres of writing for different purposes (i.e., to write an academic paper or deliver a presentation)