Florida Atlantic University – D.F. Schmidt College of Art & Letters – Department of Visual Art & Art History

Contemporary Art – ARH 4470 Patricia Pacoe, MFA

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Fall 2013 Monday/Wednesday

Pre-requisite ARH 2050 and ARH 2051 or in special circumstances departmental permission.

**Syllabus**

This course in Contemporary Art reviews art styles and the historical periods from 1940’s to the present day, through the lens of the visual fine arts in order to discuss how art functions in our times and relates to our cultural values. In addition to examining the objects themselves, paintings, sculptures, architecture, etc., we will explore how we look and respond to art (from any culture). The discourses surrounding the arts such as the impact of technology on art creation, art criticism, concepts by which we can think and evaluate art, patronage and reception, will all be scrutinized. Class meetings will incorporate discussions, in which all are expected to participate.

**Objectives:** In this course you will:

1. Develop knowledge of the chronology of art periods, the significant artists of each style, the dynamic factors that impact and create art styles and how these have changed since earlier traditional periods and styles. Thus the connection of cultural values to the characteristics of art will be explored.
2. Learn the skills necessary for visual observation, description and analysis.
3. Sharpen your critical thinking about art as it related to our culture.
4. Gain familiarity with various approaches to art criticism.

**Required Text:** Jonathan Fineberg’s **Art Since 1940.** Students have found it extremely useful to have the book with them during lectures, although this is not required. There can be class assignments that will require you to use the text in class. Reading Assignments are coordinated with class content.

**Methods of Instruction:** Lecture, Discussion, class handouts, PowerPoint Presentations, museum visits, books, videos, DVDs, websites.

**Methods of Assessment**: Exams, essays, paper and oral report, attendance and participation

**Course Topics**:

1. Review of Modernism/art prior to 1940s

2. Abstract Expressionism

3. Art of Late 40s and 50s

4. Asian and European Vanguards

5. Pop Art and Late 60s

6. Postmodernism

7. Pluralism

8. Painting in the 70s

9. Paintings in the 80s/90s

10. Art of the Last Decade

**Written Museum Assignment:** There will be a written assignment, which will require a museum visit. The specific details will be given in a class handout. Any written assignment can be turned in at class by the due date. Late assignments are not acceptable and receive an F grade. Late papers will only be accepted at the professor’s discretion, in the case of a documented emergency (serious illness or accident, death in the immediate family) Missed papers will be graded as an F. Do not e-mail an assignment without the permission of the professor.

Museum Paper **– Descriptive writing 2-3 pages, approximately 1,000 words. Points count similar to a test score.** A writing Rubric will be given to explain grading criteria for written grade.

As indicated in the second objective of this course, one task of art history is to learn how to discern meaning and impact through visual form. Unlike spoken or written communication, visual art conveys its messages through line, color, texture, scale, composition, space, design and many other factors. The paper will show your ability to translate your observations into written description, using appropriate art jargon.

**Final Written Paper/Oral Report**

This assignment will be completed in two parts. A contemporary artist and their significant art works will be chosen by the student that offers opportunities to synthesize knowledge of formal qualities, social and cultural context, and various interpretations as it relates to our culture. The paper should be 4-5 pages. The second part, the **Oral Report,** will be a class power point presentation summarizing your paper’s topic and objectives.

A handout will be distributed with assignment details.

**Exams:** There will be 4 exams (not cumulative). The exams will be multiple choice, true/false and include slide identification of images of art works that have been designated as significant/world renown. The test dates are listed on this syllabus. A missed exam can be made up at the professor’s discretion, only in the case of a documented emergency (serious illness or accident, death in the immediate family). Missed exams will be graded as an F.

**Grading:**

Exams: 50%

Written Assignments (Essays/Final Paper) 30%

Final Oral Presentation 10%

Attendance/Participation 10%

100%

Exam grades will be determined using the following grading scale:

A 100 – 94

A- 90 - 93

B+ 86 - 89

B 83 - 85

B- 80 - 82

C+ 76 - 79

C 72 - 75

C- 69 - 71

D+ 66 - 68

D 62 - 65

F 57 or less

**In-class Essays:** You will be given two essays questions to research and study prior to the in-class essay. One of these two essay questions will be given in class and you must write a detailed, descriptive response to the question without notes or text. A separate Writing Rubric will be used for grading the in-class essays.

**Class Meetings:** The class meets twice a week and you are expected to attend all classes. I will take roll and this will contribute to the participation percentage of your grade. There are no “excused” absences as it is common for circumstances to occur which require missing class once or twice. Your grade will suffer only if this is a recurring problem. Special exceptions, including religious observances and other exceptions that are officially recognized by the university, will be discussed and accommodated **in advance** and on an individual basis. I reserve the right to consider participation in class meetings as part of your final grade. Please withdraw if your attendance has become a problem, by the specified date.

**Decorum: Please be considerate of each other.** Late arrivals and early departures disturb the entire class and will not be tolerated. Occasionally you might have to leave early, and I greatly appreciate it if you let me know before class begins, and sit near the door that day. We will incorporate as much discussion as possible, so come prepared with questions, comments or observations. Civility and respect for the opinions of others will form the basis of these discussions. Excessive talking or other disruptions will results in removal from the class.

**Drinks in covered containers only. Cell phones and any electronic listening devices, etc. are to be invisible and inaudible. See me about using computers.**

**Electronics**: In accordance with university policy, mobile phones and beepers must be turned off during class time. Recording of lectures without the professor’s advance permission is strictly forbidden. Materials recorded will be turned into professors at term’s end.

**Academic Integrity**: You are a member of an academic community where respect for the work of other scholars is paramount. Using without acknowledging intellectual property, either words or ideas, is theft. Students at Florida Atlantic University are expected to maintain the highest ethical standards. Academic dishonesty, including cheating and plagiarism, is considered a serious breach of these ethical standards, because it interferes with the University mission to provide a high quality education in which no student enjoys an unfair advantage over any other. Academic dishonesty is also destructive of the University community, which is grounded in a system of mutual trust and places high value on personal integrity and individual responsibility. Harsh penalties are associated with academic dishonesty. For more information, see <http://www.fau.edu/regulations/chapter4/4.001_Code_of_Academic_Integrity.pdf>

. If you are not sure what constitutes plagiarism, or how to properly cite your sources, please meet with professor. Resources will also be provided in class.

**Writing Center:** FAU maintains a wonderful resource to help students improve their writing skills: the University Center for Excellence in Writing ([www.fau.edu/UCEW](http://www.fau.edu/UCEW))

**Students with Disabilities and Special Needs:** STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES: In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), students who require special accommodations due to a disability to properly execute coursework must register with the Office for Students with Disabilities (OSD) located in Boca Raton SU 133 (561-297-3880), in Davie - LA 240 (954-236-1657), in Jupiter - SR 110 (561-799-8585) and follow all OSD procedures. For more information, see: [http://osd.fau.edu](https://exchange.fau.edu/owa/redir.aspx?C=P8DY0tvu5UKG2oRvutlcU5iw-4UipdAI7Azq3qxNKQf3GYgVDM8zKiukWE8Cx83rxE2GzOioWjI.&URL=http%3a%2f%2fosd.fau.edu).

**Contemporary Art Calendar/Assignments**

## *Week 1* Review Syllabus – What is Contemporary Art?

Aug 26/28 **Lecture:** Review of Modernism/Marcel Duchamp & Dadaism

**Week 2 Labor Day Holiday**

Sept 2  **Lecture: New York in the 40s**

Sept 4Reading Assignment**:** Chapter 2

***Week 3* Lecture: Dialogue with Europe**

Sept 9/11Reading Assignment: Chapter 3

**Week 4 Lecture: Abstract Expressionism**

Sept 16/18Reading Assignment: Chapter 4

**Exam covering Chapters 1/2/3 (18th)**

**Week 5 Lecture: Art of the Late 40s**

Sept 23/25Reading Assignment: Chapter 5

**In-class Essay (25th)**

**Week 6 Lecture: International Tendencies of 50s**

Sept 30/Oct 2Reading Assignment: Chapter 6

**Week 7 Lecture: The Beat Generation:**

Oct 7/9 Reading Assignment: Chapter 7

**Museum Paper Due (7th)**

**Week 8 Lecture: Landscape of Signs: American/British Pop Art**

Oct 14/16 Reading Assignment: Chapter 9

**Exam covering Chapters 5/6/7 (16th)**

**Week 9 Lecture: The Late 60s**

Oct 21/23 Reading Assignment: Chapter 10

Museum Visit

**Week 10 Lecture: Politics and Postmodernism**

Oct 28/30 Reading Assignment: Chapter 11

In-class Essay

**Week 11 Lecture: Corporate Culture**

Nov 4/6 Reading Assignment: Chapter 12

**Week 12 Lecture: Painting in the 70s**

**Nov 11 Holiday: Veterans Day**

Nov 13 Reading Assignment: Chapter 13

**Exam covering Chapters 9/10/11/12 (13th)**

**Week 13 Lecture: Art of the 80s/Graffiti Art**

Nov 18/20 Reading Assignment: Chapter 14

**Week 14 Lecture: The 90s**

Nov 25/27 Reading Assignment: Chapter 15

**Final Paper Due (25th)**

Film (27th)

**Week 15 Lecture: A New Century**

Dec 2/4 Reading Assignment: Chapter 16

**Oral Presentations: Dec 2**

**Final** Date to be announced

Covering Chapters 13/14/15/16