EXPANDED COURSE DESCRIPTION

ART HISTORY

School of the Arts, Media, Performance and Design
Department of Visual Art Art History

FA / ARTH 3680E3.0 SECTION M
1960S ART IN THE USA AND EUROPE
FALL 2019 / WINTER 2020

Last Modified Date: 01/10/2020

COURSE CALENDAR DESCRIPTION

Examines the work, processes and context of artists who emerged in Europe and the United States immediately after the Abstract Expressionists and their European counterparts. These may include:
Post-painterly Abstraction, proto-Pop, Pop Art, Cubist-Constructivist sculpture, Minimalism, photo-realism, earth art, kinetic art, the El Paso group in Madrid, Joseph Beuys, the beginning of post-modern architecture, and early performance art. Course requirements: Individually chosen mix of essays and tests. Prerequisite: FA/VISA 2620 6.00.

Examines the work, processes and context of artists who emerged in Europe and the United States immediately after the Abstract Expressionists and their European counterparts. These may include:
Post-painterly Abstraction, proto-Pop, Pop Art, Cubist-Constructivist sculpture, Minimalism, photo-realism, earth art, kinetic art, the El Paso group in Madrid, Joseph Beuys, the beginning of post-modern architecture, and early performance art. Course requirements: Individually chosen mix of essays and tests. Prerequisite: FA/VISA 2620 6.00

INSTRUCTOR(S)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Section / Format / Term</th>
<th>Contact Email</th>
<th>Contact Phone</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>El-Sheikh, Tammer</td>
<td>Sec. M / BLEN / W</td>
<td><a href="mailto:tammer75@yorku.ca">tammer75@yorku.ca</a></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

SPECIAL FEATURES

Course Director: Tammer El-Sheikh
Term: Winter 2020
Class location and hours: CFA 330. Wed. 10:00 – 1:00.
Office and office hours: CFA 264. Tues. 10 – 12 or by appointment.
Email. Tammer75@yorku.ca
This course is designed to introduce students to the art produced in North American and Europe in the 1960s. We will examine art produced in a broad range of media. Readings will be drawn from artists’ statements and interviews, contemporaneous criticism and theory as well as from an overarching history of the period. The art of this period frequently emerged as a direct reaction to the issues and political events of the era both within Europe and North America and abroad. In recognition of this, we will spend a significant portion of our time considering this international context and its relationship to the art produced. Our three-hour class periods will be a mixture of lectures, large and small group discussions, videos, and field trips.

TOPICS AND CONCEPTS

TEXTS AND READINGS

David Hopkins’s *After Modern Art 1945 – 2017 2nd Edition* (Oxford University Press, 2018) (Available at the York Bookstore or online) While this is a solid, well-illustrated, and reasonably priced core text, it cannot
fulfill all our needs. The other readings will develop ideas and viewpoints about 1960s art that are essential for this course. The weekly course schedule and full list of readings will be available through the course Moodle site. These readings will be accessible online and do not require the purchase of an additional course kit. All readings are mandatory and are to be done before the class for which they are listed.

Main Sources for Supplementary Readings:

**SCHEDULE OF READINGS AND TOPICS**

**Week 1, Jan. 8:** Introduction to the Course: Art and Politics in the Cold War Era.

**Week 2, Jan. 15:** The Americans and the Un-Americans: Art and Politics in the McCarthy Era.

To Read: Hopkins, Chpt. One (5 – 23); Hopkins, Chpt. Two (43 – 57); Leo Steinberg, “Contemporary Art and the Plight of the Public” in Harper’s Magazine, March 1, 1962.

**Week 3, Jan. 22:** Societies of the Spectacle (S.O.S.)

To Read: Hopkins, Chpt. Three (71 – 86); Richard Hamilton, “Popular Culture and Personal Responsibility” (298 – 300, Stiles); Guy Debord, “Writings from the Situationist International 1957 – 61” (693 – 700, Harrison)

**Week 4, Jan. 29:** Sight Unseen

To read: Hopkins, Chpt. One (23 – 32); Helen Frankenthaler, “Interview with Henry Geldzahler” (28 – 31, Stiles); Clement Greenberg, “Modernist Painting” (754 – 760, Harrison)

*Paper #1 due*

**Week 5, Feb. 5:** Pop Goes the World

To Read: Hopkins, Chpt. 4 (89 – 119); David Hockney and Larry Rivers, “Beautiful or Interesting” (222 – 229, Stiles); Lawrence Alloway, “The Arts and the Mass Media” (700 – 703, Harrison)

**Week 6, Feb. 12:** Saving Grace

To Read: Hopkins, Chpt. 5 (121 – 141); Agnes Martin, “The Untroubled Mind” (128 – 138, Stiles); Michael Fried, “Art and Objection” (822 – 834, Harrison)
*Mid-term exam in-class

Reading Week (Feb. 19. No class)

Week 7 Feb. 26: Cut ‘Peace’: Performing Protest

To Read: Jiro Yoshihara, “The Gutai Manifesto” (695 – 698, Stiles); Yoko Ono, “To the Wesleyan People” (736 -739, Stiles); Mark Mann, “It’s Okay to Laugh: The Political Turn in Bridget Moser’s Prop Art” in MOMUS: A Return to Art Criticism, Dec. 2, 2019.

Week 8, Mar. 4: “Sous les pavés, la plage!”

Week 9, Mar. 11: The Art of Interests and the Interesting
To Read: Hopkins, Chpt. Six (158 – 180); The Art Worker’s Coalition, “Statement of Demands” (901 – 902, Harrison); Mary Kelly, “Preface to Post-partum Document” (858 – 861, Stiles); (Tammer El-Sheikh, “Interesting”, Canadian Art (Spring, 2018)

*Paper #2 due

Week 10, Mar. 18: N.E. Thing at the End of an Era
To Read: Hopkins, Chpt. Seven (183 – 214); Art-Language, Letter to Lucy R. Lippard and John Chandler Concerning the Article “The Dematerialization of Art” (850 – 851, Stiles); Lucy Lippard, “Interview with Ursula Meyer” and “Postface” to Six Years (893 – 896, Harrison)

Week 11, Mar. 25: Guest Presentations

Week 12, April 1: *Final Test

LIST OF LEARNING OUTCOMES AND EXAMPLES OF

By the end of this course, students will have developed an understanding of the artistic culture and products of the 1960s. Through readings, discussions, and assignments, students will also acquire critical thinking and writing skills. These skills will be developed and demonstrated by discussing the form, content and context of works of art and by analyzing the role of institutions and the marketplace on the field of modern art. We will also take advantage of the resources of local collections and exhibitions in order to have direct contact with art works exemplifying the forms and themes of the course.

GRADED ASSESSMENT
1. Written analysis (Due Jan. 29): 20%
2. Mid-term test (Feb. 12 in-class): 20%
3. Reading response paper (Due March 11): 20%
4. Final test (April 1, in class): 20%
5. Participation (in large and small group discussions): 20%

The last day to drop this course without receiving a grade is March 13.

ASSIGNMENTS

WRITING ASSIGNMENTS (must be submitted online through Moodle and in hard copy)
1. **Due Jan. 29:** In his famous essay “Contemporary Art and the Plight of its Public,” Leo Steinberg struggled with his aesthetic and intellectual reactions to an exhibition of Jasper John’s paintings. The first assignment in this course asks you to use Steinberg’s essay as a model to analyze a work of art, made in the 1960s, at York University or in the collection of the AGO. You will write a 750 word (3-4 pages double-spaced, typed) analysis of the work’s formal qualities and consider its possible impact. The purpose of this assignment is to offer you practice in thinking and writing critically about art. Specific expectations for this assignment will be posted on the Moodle site.

2. **Due March 11:** You will write a 750 word (3-4 pages double-spaced, typed) response to one of the following two articles: a) “The Painting Must Go’ Hannah Black Pens Open Letter to the Whitney About Controversial Biennial Painting” by Alex Greenberger, or b) “How Protest Works Now: Understanding the ‘Tear Gas Biennial’ and its Historic Effect” by Ben Davis. Identify at least one key point in your chosen article. Do you agree or disagree with the author? Why or why not? You should compare the author’s views to those of other authors we have read. The purpose of this assignment is to analyze the tactics and strategies of critique employed by artists in the 60s to protest racism, illegitimate wars, colonialism, consumerism, etc., and those employed in these recent Whitney Biennial controversies. Specific expectations for this assignment will be posted on the Moodle site.

3. **Tests (Feb 12 and April 1)**
Both tests will follow the same two-part format consisting of slide comparisons and a short answer section. For the comparisons, you will be asked to identify the artist, title, medium and date of the works. Then you will be asked to compare and contrast the works with reference to factors both intrinsic and extrinsic to the image. We will take some time to practice slide comparisons in class to give everyone a chance to practice the technique before the mid-term test. On the same days that these review sessions take place, a list of the slides will be posted on the course website.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

ACADEMIC HONESTY

Codes of Academic Honesty apply to all course assignments. It is expected that you will produce all work on your own and fully acknowledge any sources used in your assignments. For any further concerns or questions, please see the instructor or the “Policy of Academic Honesty” in the Undergraduate Calendar.

LATE ASSIGNMENTS

I will take off 10% from the final grade for each day writing assignments are late. Late assignments should be delivered to the Visual Arts office (CFA 232). A staff member will stamp the date and time the paper was received before you drop it in my essay drop box at the far end of the Visual Arts hallway. Late assignments will not always be returned to you along with those assignments received on time.

PARTICIPATION

Participation is mandatory and since this participation requires your presence in the classroom, attendance is mandatory as well. You will be asked to participate in the class in a variety of ways. We will often break down into small groups to discuss particular readings, debate a particular issue or brainstorm test questions.
Of course, we will also have larger group discussions.

In order to receive full marks for participation you must be present, on time and well prepared at every class and you must also contribute to the discussion in ways that are both thoughtful and respectful. Coming late to class, leaving early, not being prepared and not participating in class or small group discussions all make the class less enjoyable for everyone and will impact your grade. **When you are late or absent, you are responsible for finding out what happened in class by contacting one of your classmates.**

**SPECIAL NEEDS**

Students with disabilities, particular religious beliefs, or others who might need some modifications to be made to the course schedule or requirements should see me during office hours, as soon as possible, to make arrangements.

**EXTRA COSTS**

Getting out of the classroom to experience art is an essential part of this course. It is likely that there will be additional costs to students for transportation and, perhaps, for admission. In all cases these will be kept to a minimum, and they will be announced to the class as soon as possible.

---

**Many courses utilize Moodle, York University’s course website system. If your course is using Moodle, click here to access it.**

*Moodle @ York University*