Spring 1-2016

ARTH 509.01: Critical Theories Visual Arts II

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Office hours: Wednesday 11:00-12:00 a.m. and by appointment

Course description: This course focuses on theories, ideas, and trends in contemporary art. Students will consider contemporary art practices, cultural, political, and identity issues, global perspectives, aesthetic concerns, and postmodernism and its reverberations. Students will also focus on the critical theories that inform the art of the recent past and present. With these resources, students will investigate specific topics that relate to and expand their own creative studio practice.

Learning Objectives:
- Build an awareness of contemporary ideas and relationship between theoretical ideas and artmaking.
- Develop research skills necessary to sustain conceptual development as practicing professional artists.
- Deepen and expand each student’s understanding of his/her/their specific areas of interest.
- Develop written and verbal skills articulating complex theoretical, aesthetic, and conceptual material.


Requirements for Course:
- Read and discuss texts on contemporary theories, aesthetics, and content.
- Refine and clarify the theoretical position of one’s own art practice.
- Become familiar with the work and goals of artists of the recent past and present in order to identify their formal, material, and conceptual interests and to recognize possible approaches and strategies for artmaking.
- Research theory (for example, semiotics, relational aesthetics, and altermodernism); themes and social phenomena (for example, post-colonialism and technology); and related studies in other disciplines (psychological pathology, fractal studies, etc.) that will inform and enrich one’s own practice.

Expectations and Evaluation:
- Attend class prepared to discuss the readings and present any assigned work
- Actively participate in class discussion
- Write three five-page essays (with revisions) based on research on artists and critical theories
- Make three PowerPoint presentations on specific readings/topics
- Students will complete all assignments in order to earn credit for the class
- Students are expected to keep copies of all assigned work
- Students will utilize Moodle at http://umonline.umt.edu/ for course syllabus, lectures, assignments, other course materials, announcements, and grades.

Spheres of Influence Assignment: 50 points, due date 2 February

Essays, with revisions:
- “Aesthetics:” Artist, Art Work, Critics/Theories, 100 points, due date 16 February
- “Identity/Subjectivity:” Artist, Art Work, Critics/Theories, 100 points, due dates 8 and 15 March
- “Methods/Theories:” Artist, Art Work, Critics/Theories, 100 points, due dates 22 and 29 March

PowerPoint Presentations:
- “Decades:” 100 points, due dates 2 and 9 February
- “Politics:” 100 points, due dates 23 February and 1 March
- “Technology:” 100 points, due dates 12 April and 3 May
Students with disabilities or special needs should contact the instructor.

**Academic Misconduct and the Student Conduct Code**: All students must practice academic honesty. Academic misconduct is subject to an academic penalty by the course instructor and/or disciplinary sanction by the University. All students need to be familiar with the Student Conduct Code. The Code is available for review online at [http://life.umt.edu/vpsa/student_conduct.php](http://life.umt.edu/vpsa/student_conduct.php).

**Lecture and Discussion Topics and Assignments**

**Week One, 26 January**
- Getting to know you, 30 minutes
- *Spheres of Influence Assignment*, Paired Sharing and Introductions, 30 minutes
- Break, 15-20 minutes
- **Text:** Part I: “Introduction,” 60 minutes

  Thursday 28 January, UC Art Gallery, Opening Reception, 5-6 pm
  *The Inevitable Comparison*, Alissa Wynne

**Week Two, 2 February**
- *Spheres of Influence Assignment*, Developments in Paired Sharing and Introductions, 30 minutes
- **Text:** Part II: “Decades” PowerPoint Presentations
  - 1945-60, 45 minutes
  - 1960-70, 45 minutes
- Break, 15-20 minutes
- **Discussion:** Theaster Gates, [http://theastergates.com/home.html](http://theastergates.com/home.html), 30 minutes

  Thursday 4 February, Gallery of Visual Arts, Opening Reception, 5-7 pm
  *What Lay Before – What Lay After*, Sculpture and Paintings by Francis Paul Pearson

  Friday, 5 February, Opening Reception, Frontier Space, 5-7 pm
  Sarah Knobel *Drips* - (photography and video) [http://www.sarahknobel.com](http://www.sarahknobel.com)

**Week Three, 9 February**
- **Text:** Part II: “Decades” PowerPoint Presentations
  - 1970-80, 45 minutes
  - 1980-90, 45 minutes
  - 1990-2005, 45 minutes
- Break, 10 minutes

**Week Four, 16 February**
- **Text:** Part III: “Aesthetics”
  - Formalism, 30 minutes
  - Art as Idea, 30 minutes
  - Beauty, 30 minutes
- Break, 15-20 minutes
- **Discussion:** Elizabeth Turk, [https://www.macfound.org/fellows/44/](https://www.macfound.org/fellows/44/), 30 minutes

**Week Five, 23 February**
- **Text:** Part IV: “Politics”
Avant-Garde, 50 minutes  
Activism, 50 minutes
Break: 15-20 minutes  
Discussion: Nicole Eisenman, https://www.macfound.org/fellows/936/, 30 minutes

**Week Six, 1 March**  
**Text:** Part IV: “Politics”  
Culture Wars, 50 minutes  
Art & Its Publics, 50 minutes  
Break, 15-20 minutes  
Discussion: Janine Antoni, http://www.luhringaugustine.com/artists/janine-antoni, 30 minutes

Thursday 3 March, UC Art Gallery Opening Reception 4-6 pm  
**UCG Juried Show: Bedtime Stories**

Friday, 4 March, Opening Reception, Frontier Space, 5-7 pm  
Todd Christensen (opening 3/4) - (printmaking and installation) http://christensentodd.com

**Week Seven, 8 March**  
**Text:** Part V: “Identity/Subjectivity”  
The Artist, 30 minutes  
Diaspora, 30 minutes  
Feminism, 30 minutes  
Queer, 30 minutes  
Break, 15-20 minutes  
Discussion: Glenn Ligon, http://www.regenprojects.com/artists/glenn-ligon, 30 minutes

Thursday, 10 March, Gallery of Visual Arts, Opening Reception, 5-7 pm  
MFA Thesis Exhibitions, Tressa Jones, Kate Lund, and Aja Mujinga Sherrard  
10-24 March

**Week Eight, 15 March**  
**Text:** Part V: “Identity/Subjectivity”  
Race/Ethnicity, 30 minutes  
Embodiment, 30 minutes  
Discussion: Moriko Mori, http://www.japansociety.org/event/rebirth-recent-work-by-mariko-mori, 30 minutes

School of Art presents Visiting Artist Monika Meler  
Social Science Building, Room 356, 5:10 pm.

**Week Nine, 22 March**  
**Text:** Part VI: “Methods/Theories”  
Marxism, 50 minutes  
Post Structuralism, 50 minutes  
Break, 15-20 minutes  
Discussion: Daniel Buren, http://www.danielburen.com/map?type=exhibits_current, 30 minutes

**Week Ten, 29 March**  
**Text:** Part VI: “Methods/Theories”  
Post Colonialism, 50 minutes  
Visual Culture, 50 minutes  
Break, 15-20 minutes

Friday, 1 April, Opening Reception, Frontier Space
Michael Workman (print, new media, performance etc.), http://michaeltworkman.com

Spring Break, 4-8 April 2016

Week Eleven, 12 April
Text: Part VII: “Technology”
Mass Culture, High/Low, 50 minutes
Photography/Index, 50 minutes
Break, 15-20 minutes
Discussion: Jeff Koons, http://www.jeffkoons.com, 30 minutes

Thursday, 14 April, Gallery of Visual Arts Opening Reception, 5-7 pm
MFA Thesis Exhibitions, David Tarullo and Beth Huhtala
12-21 April

Thursday, 14 April, UC Art Gallery, Opening Reception, 4-6 pm
Mutually Exclusive, Crista Ames & Karl Schwiesow

Week Twelve, 19 April
No Class

Week Thirteen 26 April
No Class

Thursday, 28 April, UC Art Gallery, Opening Reception 4-6 pm
BFA Senior Thesis Exhibition

Thursday, 28 April, Gallery of Visual Arts, Opening Reception 5-7 pm
BFA Senior Thesis Exhibition

Week Fourteen, 3 May
Text: Part VII: “Technology”
Spectacle/Appropriation, 50 minutes
Digital Media, 50 minutes
Break, 15-20 minutes

Missoula Art Museum: Holly Andres, Photographer
Distinguished Artist Lecture: May 3, 7 PM
First Friday: May 6, 5-8 PM
Artist Reception and Gallery Talk: May 6, 7 PM

Friday, 6 May, Opening Reception, Frontier Space
Monika Meler (printmaking)