Art History 400 A (grad 525 A), Autumn 2019

**Performance Art**

Professor Adair Rounthwaite, vadair@uw.edu

M/W 1:00-2:20pm

Office hours M/W 2:30-3:30pm, Art Building 367

Course description

This course examines the development of performance art from its emergence in the mid-20th-century up to the present. During that period, performance practices developed simultaneously in numerous different places around the world. Performance has been compelling to artists who seek to explore personal and collective identity, to push the boundaries of the relationship between artist and artwork, to ignite political transformation, and to understand what it means to exist in the contemporary world. The performances we will analyze range from serious to campy, from lighthearted to harrowing, and from fleeting to long in duration. Across this range of work, we will gain an understanding of performance’s intimate connection to artistic innovation in the late 20th and early 21st-centuries.

Structure

Each week will be divided into a “history” session where we look closely at specific historical performance practices, and a “theory” session where we supplement and complicate our understanding of that history through the in-depth analysis of theoretical texts from art history and performance studies. For each pair, the “history” session is accompanied by only very light reading, while the “theory” session will require that you prepare through careful reading of complex and sometime dense texts. Students will complete focused pieces of writing in which they engage with theoretical texts and with documents of performance art. They will be responsible for presenting one reading to the class in a group. Regular, vocal class participation is an important component of doing well in the course.

Learning goals

* To become familiar with a diverse range of performance art practices from the mid-20th-century to the present, and to analyze how these practices connect to social struggles over identity, belonging, and freedom.
* To articulate the importance of performance for your own intellectual or artistic practice.
* To gain an understanding of how theorists and philosophers have written about performance, and how those ideas have evolved over time.
* To strengthen written analytical skills in the close analysis of texts and documents.
* To strengthen verbal analytical skills through a class presentation and group discussion.

Evaluation

All written assignments will be submitted via Canvas only and are due at 11:59pm on the due date.

You have two options in terms of the written assignments for this course. The following modes of evaluation are common to all students:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 10% | “Questions about Performance” introductory assignment, 1-3 pages double-spaced 12-point Times New Roman font, due Wednesday, October 2nd  |
| 15% | Group presentation of a reading |
| 15% | Class participation, including speaking in class, completing the readings and bringing them with you to class, and being prepared to contribute informed comments about the texts when asked by me or by your peers. Excellent participation grades will be reserved for students who contribute substantially to the discussion at least once a week. |
| **Then you may choose one of the following options: either assignments 1 AND 2, or assignment 3.**  |
| 30% | 1. Analysis of a performance document, 4-5 pages, due Friday, November 1st at 11:59pm via Canvas
 |
| 30% | 1. Individual written debrief of group presentation, 4-5 pages, due Friday, December 6th at 11:59pm via Canvas
 |
| **OR** |
| 60% | 1. 15-20 page research paper on a topic of your choice. A preliminary abstract is due Friday, November 1st at 11:59pm via Canvas. The final paper is due Friday, December 6th
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Schedule and readings

A \* indicates a reading you can pick for your presentation

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Date | Topic | Reading |
| W 9/25 | Introduction and syllabus review**Sign up for presentation dates** |  |
| M 9/30 | Expressionism, Action, and the Body  | Jiro Yoshihara, “The Gutai Manifesto (1956),” from Kristine Stiles and Peter Selz, eds. *Theories and Documents of Contemporary Art: A Sourcebook of Artists' Writings*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998, 821-24. |
| W 10/2 | **Questions about Performance due via Canvas at 11:59pm** | Amelia Jones, “The Pollockian Performative and the Revision of the Modernist Subject,” from *Body Art/Performing the Subject*, 53-102.J.L. Austin, *How to Do Things with Words*. Second ed. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1975, 1-11. |
| M 10/7 | Classic Era Body Art  | Vito Acconci, “Steps into Performance (And Out) (1979),” from Stiles and Selz, 913-19.Chris Burden, “Border Crossing: Interview with Jim Moisan (1979),” from Stiles and Selz, 903-4. |
| W 10/9 |  | \*Alexander Dumbadze, *Bas Jan Ader: Death Is Elsewhere*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2015, XX-XX. |
| M 10/14 | Identity Politics of the 1980s and 1990s | Eleanor Antin, “Notes on Transformation (1974),” from Stiles and Selz, 892-94.  |
| W 10/16 |  | \*Peggy Phelan, “The Ontology of Performance: Representation Without Reproduction.” In *Unmarked: The Politics of Performance*. London and New York: Routledge, 1993, 146-66. Judith Butler, “Conclusion: From Parody to Politics.” In *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*. New York: Routledge, 1990, 142-49. |
| M 10/21 | Latinx Performance in the US | Regina José Galindo, “I Am A Common Place (1999),” from Stiles and Selz, 945-47. |
| W 10/23 |  | \*Ila Sheren, *Portable Borders: Performance Art and Politics on the U.S. Frontera since 1984*. Austin: University of Texas Press, 2015, 59-89. |
| M 10/28 | Performance Reenactment | Amelia Jones, “‘Presence’ in Absentia: Experiencing Performance as Documentation.” *Art Journal* 56 (Winter 1997): 11-18.\*Rebecca Schneider, “Archives: Performance Remains.” *Performance Research* 6, no. 2 (2001): 100-08. Anthologized in Amelia Jones and Adrian Heathfield, eds. *Perform, Repeat, Record: Live Art in History*. London: Intellect Ltd., 2012, 137-50.Philip Auslander, “The Performativity of Performance Documentation.” *PAJ* 28, no. 3 (Sept. 2006): 1-10. |
| W 10/30 | Performance Reenactment case studies | **Performance document analysis or initial abstract due Friday, Nov. 1 at 11:59pm** |
| M 11/4 | African Diasporic Performance | William Pope.L, “One Thing After Another (2001-8),” in Stiles and Selz, 942-3. |
| W 11/6 |  | \*Krista Thompson, *Shine: The Visual Economy of Light in African Diasporic Practice*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2015, pages 215-70.Daphne Brooks, “‘This Voice Which Is Not One’: Amy Winehouse Sings the Ballad of Sonic Blue(s)Face Culture.” *Women & Performance* 20, no. 1 (2010): 37-60. |
| M 11/11 | **Presidents’ Day, no class** |  |
| W 11/13 | Performance and Body Art in Eastern Europe | Mladen Stilinović, “In Praise of Laziness,” 1993. Available at <http://monumenttotransformation.org/atlas-of-transformation/html/l/laziness/in-praise-of-laziness-mladen-stilinovic.html> |
| M 11/18 |  | \* Anya Bernstein, “An Inadvertent Sacrifice: Body Politics and Sovereign Power in the Pussy Riot Affair.” *Critical Inquiry* 40, no. 1 (Fall 2013): 220-41. In Jasmina Tumbas, “Countering Persecution, Misconceptions, and Nationalism: Roma Identity and Contemporary Activist Art.” In Marina Gržinić and Aneta Stojnić, eds. *Shifting Corporealities in Contemporary Performance: Danger, Im/mobility and Politics*. Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, 2018, 103-27. |
| W 11/20 | Queer Performance | Ron Athey, “*Deliverance*: Introduction,” in Stiles and Selz, 943-45. |
| M 11/25 |  | \*José Esteban Muñoz, *Disidentifications: Queers of Color and the Performance of Politics*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1999, 1-34, 161-79. |
| W 11/27 | **Open office hours during class time to support the completion of your final assignment** |  |
| M 12/2 | Performance, Discipline, and Productivity | \*Jon McKenzie, *Perform or Else: From Discipline to Performance*. New York and London: Routledge, 2001, 3-53. |
| W 12/4 | Performance, Discipline, and Productivity, continuedClosing discussion | **Research paper or written presentation debrief due Friday, December 6th at 11:59pm via Canvas** |

Lateness policy

I will deduct 1/3 of a grade for every 24 hours, including weekends, that a written assignment is late (i.e. a B paper that is one day late becomes a B-). If the assignments for this course fall at times when you’ll have a heavy workload from other classes, I would be happy to have a time-management strategy discussion with you early in the quarter, in order to help you plan to complete your work on time.

Technology policy

You are permitted to use your computer to take notes in class. Please silence your cell phones. Use of cell phones, or distracting yourself, other students and me through extracurricular internet use on your laptop, will lead to a reduced participation grade.

Accommodation

I look forward to working with students who may need learning accommodations (for the official School of Art policy, see below). If you have an arrangement with Disabled Student Services, or need to travel for varsity sports, please come discuss it with me within the first week of class.

Anti-discrimination

As your instructor I am committed to making our classroom a space without discrimination, where each one of you feels comfortable expressing yourself, and equally, is willing to listen to your peers express themselves. If discrimination does arise, I invite you to discuss it with me and we can make a plan for how to rectify it. Being committed to anti-discrimination doesn’t mean that you need to be nervous about saying the “wrong” thing. Rather, it’s a commitment to process, in which all of us agree to remain generous and self-reflexive, and to help each other out in the collective work of establishing a positive group dynamic. See below for the School of Art’s official Equal Opportunity policy.

Religious accommodation

The UW’s official policy language is as follows:

Washington state law requires that UW develop a policy for accommodation of student absences or significant hardship due to reasons of faith or conscience, or for organized religious activities. The UW’s policy, including more information about how to request an accommodation, is available at [Religious Accommodations Policy (https://registrar.washington.edu/staffandfaculty/religious-accommodations-policy/)](https://registrar.washington.edu/staffandfaculty/religious-accommodations-policy/). Accommodations must be requested within the first two weeks of this course using the [Religious Accommodations Request form (https://registrar.washington.edu/students/religious-accommodations-request/)](https://registrar.washington.edu/students/religious-accommodations-request/).”

Grading scale

4-Point Scale Percentage Scale

4.0 96-100

3.9 95

3.8 94

3.7 93

3.6 92

3.5 88-91

3.4 87

3.3 86

3.2 85

3.1 84

3.0 80-83

2.9 79

2.8 78

2.7 77

2.6 76

2.5 75

2.4 74

2.3 73

2.2 72

2.1 71

2.0 70

1.9 69

1.8 68

1.7 67

1.6 66

1.5 65

1.4 64

1.3 63

1.2 62

1.1 61

1.0 60

0.9 59

0.8 58

0.7 57 (lowest passing grade)

**University of Washington**

**School of Art Policies and Procedures**

Equal Opportunity

The School of Art reaffirms its policy of equal opportunity regardless of race, color, creed, religion, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, age, marital status, disability, or status as a disabled veteran or Vietnam-era veteran in accordance with UW policy and applicable federal and state statutes and regulations.

Disability Accommodation

* If you would like to request academic accommodations due to a disability, please contact Disabled Student Services, 448 Schmitz, (206) 543-8924 (V/TTY) or uwdss@u.washington.edu.
* If you have a letter from Disabled Student Services indicating you have a disability that requires academic accommodation, please present the letter to me so we can discuss the accommodations you might need for the class.

Participation Policy

* Absences from class prevent participation and may negatively affect grades.
* If you miss class due to illness or emergencies immediately notify your instructor and insure that all missed assignments and exams are completed.

Plagiarism

* Plagiarism is defined as using in your own work the creations, ideas, words, inventions, or work of someone else without formally acknowledging them through the use of quotation marks, footnotes, bibliography, or other reference.
* Please check with your instructor if you have questions about what constitutes plagiarism.
* Instances of plagiarism will be referred to the Vice Provost/Special Asst to the President for Student Relations and may lead to disciplinary action.

Incomplete Grades an incomplete is given only when you:

* Have been in attendance and done satisfactory work through the eighth week of the quarter.
* Have furnished satisfactory proof to the instructor that the work cannot be completed because of illness or other circumstances beyond your control.

Concerns about a course, an instructor, or a teaching assistant

* Talk with the instructor in charge of the class as soon as possible.
* If you are not comfortable talking with the instructor or are not satisfied with the response that you receive, contact the Director of Advising and Student Services, Judith Clark, Art 104, 206-543-0646
* If you are not satisfied with the response that you receive you may contact the Chair of the School o f Art, Christopher Ozubko, 102 Art.

Examination Schedule

* Students are required to take exams as scheduled.
* Exceptions are granted in cases of documented emergencies and must be approved by instructor.

Grade Appeal Procedure If you are concerned that the grade you received for a class is incorrect:

* Contact the instructor who issued the grade and discuss the matter with her/him.
* If not resolved to your satisfaction make an appointment with the Director of Academic Advising and Student Services, Judith Clark, 104 Art, 543-0646.
* If necessary submit a written appeal to the Director of the School of Art who will take the matter under advisement and call a faculty committee to review the student’s course work and make a final determination concerning the grade dispute.

Materials Fees

* All art and art history classes have materials fees that are billed on your tuition statement. Information is available in 104 Art.
* If you drop a class in the first five days of the quarter, the fee is automatically removed from the quarterly billing.
* If you drop after the first five days (and before using any class materials) you must petition for a refund. Studio Art Fee Refund Petitions are available in 102 Art.
* The School of Art cannot process any petitions received after noon on the last day of the quarter.

Building Use Policy

* The Art building is open to students 365 days a year from 6am to 11pm.
* Students wishing to work in the building after 11pm obtain a key and building pass from Ann Greene in 102 Art.
* For the safety of our students, the campus police frequently monitor the facility. Individuals found without a pass may be asked to leave the building.
* All students working after hours in the studios and classrooms must maintain quiet, refrain from tampering with the work of others, and follow all regulations established by the faculty for each classroom/studio.
* Students who are not enrolled in classes for the quarter may not use the facilities, classrooms or studios in the School of Art.
* All students taking studio classes are expected to follow faculty direction in terms of keeping classrooms clean, safe, and workable for themselves and others.

Copy Write Policy

The SoA regularly displays works of art that students create in class, images of student works, and images of students participating in SoA activities. We do this to promote our students, their work and the School, and the ways we display student works and related images vary widely. Use of such images is traditional among all art schools and we assume that by participating in UW SoA classes and activities students have no objection. However, if you do have concerns about these image uses, please contact Academic Advising and Student Services (206-543-0646 or uaskart@u.ashington.edu).