Art History 381a

Art since World War II

Autumn Quarter 2021

Walter De Maria's "lightning field"


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# Course Description:

This course is designed to introduce participants to key movements, themes and strategies utilized by Western artists since c. 1940, as well as some of the ways these practices have been framed by art criticism. Although the course offers an overview of the period covered, unlike traditional survey classes, at points this class will be more narrowly focused through topical investigations of specific artists or themes. Through a series of challenging readings, we will generate discussion around many critical issues that have been addressed in the cultural sphere over the last 60 years. These include: the politics of abstraction, the role of the body, representation as a semiotic problem, gender and sexuality, authorship, and reception, etc. Though slide-based lectures will anchor the course, because discussion is integral, class participation is not only required but also vital to the success of the class as well as your grade.

# Readings:

1. **Optional Textbook**: Jonathan Fineberg. *Art since 1940: Strategies of Being*, third edition (New Jersey: Prentice Hall 2011). (This text is out of print, but many used copies are available to those who would benefit from a basic textbook to accompany lecture and special topic readings.
2. **Special Reading Topics:** PDF files on Canvas and/or a Reading Packet to be purchased at Rams Copy Center/EZ Copy and Print (4336 University Way, 206-632-6630)

# Course Requirements:

1. Active participation in all meetings. Please note, active participation assumes that you thoroughly read and think about course materials in advance of class meetings, that you meaningfully contribute to discussions, and that you complete any informal exercises assigned.
2. 2 Image Identification Quizzes (Artist, Title, Date)
3. 2 Summary Essays (3-4 pages)

4. Midterm Exam (term definitions and informal essays)

5. Art Review Essay (3-4 pages)

6.Final Exam (term definitions and informal essays)

Note: make-up exams will not be given without legitimate documentation of severe illness, family emergencies, etc. Extensions for written work will be granted only under similar conditions. Late papers will not be accepted. *All course requirements must be completed for credit to be awarded.*

# Grading:

Participation (10%)

Image Identification Quizzes (10%)

Summary Essays (20%)

Midterm Exam (25%)

Final Exam (25%)

Art Review Essay (10%)

**Key dates to remember:**

10/17 Summary Essay #1 due on Canvas

10/29 Image Identification Quiz

11/1 Midterm exam due on Canvas

11/21 Summary Essay #2 due on Canvas

12/5 Art Review due on Canvas

12/8 Image Identification Quiz

12/14 Final exam due on Canvas

## **Course Outcomes*:***

1. *Learn Actively* - *Learning is a personal, interactive process that results in greater expertise and a more comprehensive understanding of the world.*

* Employ interdisciplinary methods of visual analysis
* Explore the relationships between art and its social, cultural, political, historical and/or religious contexts
* Develop interdisciplinary knowledge of the local, national and / or global experience of communities framed by intersections between class, race, gender, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, and other identities
* Relate personal artistic experience to discipline-based methods of analysis. Work with others to explore and appreciate the variety of responses art provokes
* Reflect explicitly on how one’s global position (perspective, affinities, and values) shapes what is experienced and how it informs judgments
* Demonstrate understanding of the historical, political, scientific, cultural and/or socioeconomic interrelationships between the local and the global

1. *Think Critically, Creatively and Reflectively - Reason and imagination are fundamental to problem solving and critical examination of ideas.*

* Use a variety of approaches to think critically about and reflect on personal assumptions and alternative views regarding issues of power and inequality as they relate to issues of the visual representation of sexuality, ethnicity, gender, and religion
* Identify key art historical issues, determine the assumptions underlying arguments, and recognize the way that historical and cultural context affect meaning
* Explore and articulate various ways that art represents cultural identity which is shaped by varying degrees of power and privilege, in relation to both a local context and interconnected world
* Confront issues of rapid and violent social and technological change and their effect on art

## *Communicate with Clarity and Originality* ***- The ability to exchange ideas and information is essential to personal growth, productive work, and societal vitality.***

* Discuss multiple interpretations of course content as it relates to structures of power and inequality using discipline-appropriate concepts and theories, and articulate how and why these structures inform personal, professional, and social identities
* Demonstrate intercultural understanding and sensitivity by integrating cross-cultural verbal and non-verbal communication practices and skills when engaging with others
* Articulate points of view while using details of a work of art or its context as evidence
* Demonstrate proficiency to conduct guided research using a wide variety of materials from multiple international points of view
* Present results of research and analysis to classmates in verbal and written form
* Use appropriate sources and technologies to gather and present information
* Question and reflect on assumptions, statements and information made throughout the course by the text, instructors, and students
* Demonstrate effective use of interdisciplinary methodologies employed in the course to visually analyze works of art
* Contribute ideas and information individually and in a group dynamic

1. *Interact in Diverse and Complex Environments* ***–*** *Successful negotiation through our increasingly complex, interdependent, and global society requires knowledge and awareness of self and others, as well as enhanced interaction skills.*

* Engage with complex differences between disparate cultures as manifest through social inequities. As part of this practice, students will recognize and articulate their understanding of diverse perspectives
* Collaborate with peers to discuss course material and plan for presentations or group papers
* Demonstrate the ability to listen for, to and across differences, by articulating one’s own frame of reference and its application in reference to others
* Work collaboratively and be able to translate those experiences to mutually advantageous interactions on campus and with the larger community
* Demonstrate the ability to be civil during discussions and respectful of opposing views

[**School of Art Policies**](https://art.washington.edu/policies)

[**Religious Accommodations Policy**](https://registrar.washington.edu/staffandfaculty/religious-accommodations-policy/)

**VeriCite anti-plagiarism software:**

**Notice**: *The University has a license agreement with VeriCite, an educational tool that helps prevent or identify plagiarism from Internet resources and work submitted by previous students of this course. I will use the service in this class; all assignments and quizzes you submit will be checked by VeriCite. The VeriCite Report will indicate the amount of original text in your work and whether all material that you quoted, paraphrased, summarized, or used from another source is appropriately referenced. All instances of intentional plagiarism will result in zero credit on the assignment, and a report of indicating academic dishonesty to the School of Art and the University of Washington. For further information, visit:* <https://itconnect.uw.edu/learn/tools/canvas/canvas-help-for-instructors/assignments-grading/vericite/plagiarism-faqs/>

**Course Outline and Reading Assignments**

(Please have these assignments read by the date listed below. Please remember that all Fineberg readings listed in this syllabus are optional.)

W 9/29 ***Introduction to the course***

F 10/1 ***Mid-century art and historical contexts***

Fineberg 14-38. (Please remember that all Fineberg readings

listed in this syllabus are optional)

Packet:

* Stuart Davis, “On Abstract Art,” from *Abstract Painting in America* (1935): 122-23.
* Clive Bell, “The Aesthetic Hypothesis,” (1914) in *Modern Art and*

*Modernism* (1982): 67-78.

* Edward Henning, “Surrealism: In the Footsteps of Freud,” *Art News* (May 1980): 122-24.

M 10/4- ***Abstract Expressionism and the hegemony of formalist criticism***

W 10/6 Fineberg 57-71 (Hofmann, Gorky), 77-88 (De Kooning), 89-112 (Pollock, Newman, Rothko).

Packet:

* Foster, Krauss, Bois and Buchloh, *Art since 1900: Modernism, Antimodernism, Postmodernism*, vol. 2 (2004): 355-59, 439-44.
* Clement Greenberg, “Modernist Painting,” in G. Battcock ed. *The*

*New Art* (1966):101-110.

* Optional: Harold Rosenberg, “The American Action Painters,” (1952) from *Art in Theory 1900-2000* (2003): 589-594.

F 10/8 ***Critiques and transgressions of formalist criticism****:* ***The Neo-Avant Garde***

Fineberg 165-178 (Rauschenberg), 194-207 (Johns), 281-292.

Packet:

* Irving Sandler, “The Duchamp-Cage Aesthetic*,” The New York School* (NY: Harper and Row 1978): 163-71.
* Foster, *et al* (2004): 404-10, 492-95.
* Robert Morris, “Notes on Sculpture 1 & 2,” (1966) in *Continuous Project Altered Daily: The Writings of Robert Morris (*1993): 1-21.

M 10/11  ***Postwar European painting***

Fineberg 125-146, 209-216 (*Nouveau Realisme*).

Packet:

* Jean Dubuffet, “Notes for the Well-Lettered,” (1946) from *Art in Theory 1900-2000* (2003): 603-605.
* Foster, *et al* (2004): 337-42.

W 10/13- ***Early Performance Art***

F 10/15 Fineberg 182-187, 225-228 (Ono).

Packet:

* Barbara Haskell, “Happenings,” *Blam! The Explosion of Pop, Minimalism and Performance 1958-64* (NY: The Whitney Museum 1984): 31-48.
* Haskell, “Fluxus,” *Blam!…*(1984): 49-60.

**\*\*\*Summary Essay due (see Canvas)**

## M 10/18- ***Pop Art***

W 10/20 Fineberg 229-255.

Packet:

* Foster, *et al* (2004): 385-390, 445-49, 486-91.
* Sidra Stich, “The Cultural Climate after World War II,” *Made in U.S.A.: An Americanization in Modern Art, the 50’s & 60’s* (Berkeley: University of California 1987): 6-13.
* Foster, *et al* (2004): 415-20.

F 10/22- ***Feminism in America: essentialist vs. discursive subjects***

M 10/25 Fineberg 369-373, 394-95 (Sherman), 336-38 (Mendieta), 460-64.

Packet:

* Norma Broude and Mary Garrard. “Introduction: Feminism and Art in the Twentieth Century,” *The Power of Feminist Art* (NY Abrams 1994): 10-29, 289-290.
* Kate Linker, excerpts from *Love for Sale* (NY: Abrams 1990): 12-18, 27-31, 59-64.
* Optional: Foster, *et al* (2004): 565-69, 570-75, 580-83.

W 10/27 **Catch-up and discussion**

F 10/29 **Midterm exam review and discussion. Midterm exam opens on Canvas.**

**Image Identification Quiz (Artist, Title, Date)**

M 11/1 **No Class. Midterm Exam due** (see Canvas)

W 11/3  ***Video art and Light art***

Fineberg, 223-226 (Paik), 490-93.

Packet:

## Foster, *et al* (2004): 560-64, 654-58.

## Patricia Failing, “James Turrell’s New Light on the Universe, *Art News* (April 1985): 71-78.

## Optional: Bill Viola, “Video Black—The Mortality of the Image (1990) from *Contemporary Art: A Sourcebook of Artists Writings* (1996): 446-50.

F 11/5- ***Environmental issues and art: from Earth Art to Joseph Beuys***

M 11/8 Fineberg 218-223, 309-316, 344-353.

Packet:

* David Adams, “Joseph Beuys; Pioneer of a Radical Ecology, *Art Journal* (Summer 1992): 26-34.

W 11/10 ***German Neo-Expressionism***

Fineberg 404-418, 430-433

Packet:

* Foster, *et al* (2004): 612-616.
* Andreas Huyssen, “Anselm Kiefer: The Terror of History, the Temptation of Myth,” *October* (Spring 1989): 25-45.

F 11/12 **Extended Veteran’s Day Holiday: No Class**

M 11/15- ***Art and the politics of identity***

W 11/17 Fineberg: 447-452, 480-483, 499-518.

Packet:

* Optional: Foster, *et al* (2004): 605-611, 617-21, 639-44.

F 11/19 **Catch-up and discussion**

**\*\*\*Summary Essay due (see Canvas)**

M 11/22- ***Institutional critique: the museum and “representation”***

Packet:

* Lisa Corrin, “Mining the Museum: Artists Look at Museums, Museums Look at Themselves, *Mining the Museum* (1994): 1-22.
* Foster, *et al* (2004): 496-99, 545-53, 624-29.
* Richard Shiff, “The Necessity of Jimmy Durham’s Jokes,” *Art Journal* (Fall 1992): 18-27.
* James Luna. “I’ve Always Wanted to Be an American Indian,” *Art Journal* (Fall 1992): 44-50.

W 11/24- **Extended Thanksgiving Holiday: No Class**

F 11/26

M 11/29 ***Institutional critique: the museum and “representation” (cont’d)***

W 12/1 - ***Contemporary multimedia installations.***

F 12/3 Fineberg 488-490.

Packet:

* Claire Bishop, “Activated Spectatorship,” *Installation Art* (2005): 102-127.
* Deborah Rothschild. “Introjection: in Oursler’s World, No One Escapes Its Unbidden Influences,” *Tony Oursler: Introjection* (Massachusetts: Williams College 1999): 12-37.

**\*\*\*Art Review due (see Canvas)**

M 12/6 ***Contemporary Northwest Artists***

W 12/8 **Final exam review and discussion. Final exam opens on Canvas.**

**Image Identification Quiz (Artist, Title, Date)**

F 12/10 **No Class: Work on Final Exam**

**T 12/14 Final Exam due (see Canvas)**