

"Every language has a structure about which one can say nothing in that language." —Bertrand Russell

Topics related to the definition, production and reception of art are introduced each week through a combination of readings, visual documents, web sites, film, sound and video. Each week's issues will find their place in a larger constellation of thought. Students will be asked to compare and contrast methods of/rationales for creating a 'new' framework around art while casting aside old tenets. In many sessions, lines of inquiry will be defined by a pair or small group. These discussion leaders pose prepared questions for the group to collectively unpack and extend. Each week—except where noted—*all* seminar members (i.e. not just the *leaders*) must show up ready to participate in discussion, having read the assigned chapters and written thoughtful notes in their course Journals. The majority of readings can be found in the text *Art in Theory 1900-2000: An Anthology of Changing Ideas* [Charles Harrison & Paul Wood. Malden, Mass: Blackwell Publishing, 2003, updated edition. ISBN 0-631-22708-3]. The book, although ambitious in scope, is meant to offer mere fragments from longer texts to aid in the understanding of the major trends of the century. The editors provide useful sociopolitical overviews at the start of each new section. I would encourage you to review these, along with the 'fragments', but then to seek out the full-length sources, particularly when you are a leader, so that you have a better grasp of the scope and context of the originals. Supplementary readings will be on-line and distributed in class. If you'd like to suggest a reading, please do so. My research centers around language as both material for artmaking and as an agent for change. In assembling readings & examples, I have largely opted for those tethered to 'revolutionary' ideologies involving the composition and transmission of words. This is a departure from the usual lens of art history, but will help us to focus, note overlapping concerns, acknowledge chronology, and liberate our own practices. Additional articles can be accessed at <www.jstor.org> and project MUSE <www.muse.jhu.edu> through the Fogler Library. Syllabus is subject to change. Readings are listed in the week prior to their discussion.

- 1.18            **Narrative Structure** Screening of: The Way Things Go, BN-R Music Video, Pipolotti Rist. Read aloud: "*The Object is Primary*" Otto Dix (p.408)
- Read: *General Introduction* (pp.1-8); *Intro. to Part II "The Idea of the Modern World"* (pp.127-31); "*The Foundation & Manifesto of Futurism*" Marinetti (pp.146-9); "*Futurist Painting: Technical Manifesto*" Boccioni (pp.150-2); "*From Cubism & Futurism to Suprematism*" Malevich (pp.173-83); "*Whom is LEF Alerting?*" Mayakovsky (pp.345-7); "*De Stijl: 'Manifesto I'*" (p.281); "*From Literature and Revolution*" Trotsky (pp.442-7)
- 1.25            **Typography: A Revolutionary Tool** Futurism, Russian Constructivism (Zaum); Suprematist Painting; De Stijl; Renner; H.N. Werkmann
- Read: "'Foreword' to the planned second volume of *Der Blaue Reiter*" (pp.158-9); "*Dada Fragments*" Ball (pp.250-1); "*The Richard Mutt Case*" Duchamp (p.252); Tzara (pp.252-7); Hulsenbeck (pp.257-63); "*Thank you, Francis!*" Picabia (pp.274-5); "*From the 2nd Manifesto of Surrealism*" Breton (pp.463-7)
- 2.01            **Photomontage & Action/Dissent and Disorder** Read aloud: "*Photomontage as a New Problem of Agit Art*" (pp.489-491); Look at Heartfield & Höch; Listen to: "Karawane" & other poems on [www.ubu.wfmu.org](http://www.ubu.wfmu.org); excerpt from Maud Lavin's film; Man Ray's filmic experiments
- Read: "*Forms Conceived as Language*" (p.661) & "*Detoured Painting*" Jorn (pp.707-10); "*Art after Philosophy*" Kosuth (851-862); "*Eva Hesse Interview*" (p.900-3)
- 2.08            **'Attitudes to Form' or, Analytic Propositions** Kosuth; Hesse
- Read: "*On the Concept of the 'Archetype'*" (pp.378-381); "*Sexuality in the Field of Vision*" Rose (pp.1072-1076); "*Talking*" & "*The Uncertainty of Signs*" Barthes (handout)
- 2.15            **On Love** Duchamp's Obituary by Jasper Johns (p.761); Calle's *Exquisite Pain*; *A Lover's Discourse* (No readings due next week; No new journal entries)
- 2.22            **Midterm: on-line** Prepare Journals for submission (for next class meeting)
- Read "*Modernist Painting*" Greenberg (pp.773-9); "*from The Absence of Presence*" Burgin (pp.1068-1072)

# Theory & Criticism ARH 351

Syllabus (continued)

- 3.01 **High Modernism/Modernism as Critique** The International Style; Greenberg; 'Helvetica' & The Swiss School; Implications of the Grid  
Journals collected (No entries due again until 3.22. Prepare to write a review of two works in the Pop exhibition, see below.)
- 3.08 & 3.15 No Classes-Spring Break
- Read: "Introduction to The Postmodern Condition" & "What is Postmodernism?" Lyotard (pp.1131-7); "Statements" Weiner (pp.893-4); "To be bien pensant... or not to be. To be blind" Broodthaers (pp.931-2); "Art & Language: Editorial to Art-Language" (pp.942-3); "Public Projection" Wodiczko (pp.1065-8)*
- 3.22 **Postmodernism & Deconstruction from Architecture to the Projected Image** Venturi; Graves; Gehry; Broodthaers' (*Museum*); Weiner; Pfeiffer; Wodiczko  
*Journals returned. Read: "from Myth Today" Barthes (pp.693-698)*
- 3.29 **Artists' Multiples & Critical Practices** Listen to Cixous' "Ex-Cities" (sound recording); Typesetting as Translation  
*Read: "interview with Arthur R. Rose" Barry (p.851-2); "The Arts and the Mass Media" Alloway (p.715-717); "Neo-Dada Music, Theater, Art" Maciunas (p.727-9); "Situational Aesthetics" Burgin (pp.894-896)*
- 4.05 **Witty, Sexy, Gimmicky British Pop Art** University of Maine Art Museum (In your Journal, using a consistent 'tone', write about a piece in the exhibition that you find engaging and one that you have a negative response towards. *Don't be cheeky!*)  
*Read: "Cyborg Manifesto" Haraway (on-line); "Re-viewing Modernist Criticism" Kelly (1059-64); "Homi Bhabha on 'hybridity and 'moving beyond'" (pp.1110-1116)*
- 4.12 **Moving Beyond Dialectics** Burden; Nauman; Acconci; Abramovic; Schneeman; Kelly; Holzer; Jaar; Gomez-Pena & Fusco  
*Read "Photography Versus Painting" Brik (pp. 470-7); "Mondrian as Marketing Tool" Meggs (on-line); "Place of Originality in the Digital Age" Saffo (on-line)*
- 4.19 **Place of Originality in The Digital Age** Martens; Papier Pixel; Shredder; Beowolf [sic]; Underware; Cabinet; Dexter Sinister; Ritchie  
*Read: "from Van Gogh: The Man Suicided by Society" Artaud (pp.608-611); "Writings from the SI" Debord (pp.701-707); "Beware" Buren et al. (pp. 861-7); "Interview with Nauman" (pp. 910-12); "from Subversive Signs" Foster (pp1037-9); "Statement" Sherrie Levine (p.1038-9)*
- 4.26 **Museum as Multiplex** [Institutions & Objections vs. 'Let's Entertain'] Read aloud: "Arts & Leisure" Kruger; Levine; Lawler; Game Show/MassMoca; Höller; Lot/Ek; Barney; Koolhaas & Mau  
*No readings due next week*
- 5.03 **Inclusivity & Access** Gonzalez-Torres; Interventionists; Stencil Revolution; DJ Culture; Banksy; Future Farmers; VWork; Aiken; 'YouTube'; 'My Space'; [www.potatoland.org/shredder/](http://www.potatoland.org/shredder/) (courtesy of digital landfill)

**Class Participation:** Participation is more than posing and answering questions, it is showing up prepared, and ready to engage fully. In a seminar—because the class size is small—each member has a profound impact on the character of the group as a whole. It is vital, therefore, to listen respectfully and respond with integrity, avoiding language that might alienate or offend your colleagues. This is NOT to suggest that there is not room for passionate discussion/debate. To the contrary: everyone's insight is welcome and will be accommodated.

**Attendance:** Attendance is required! As it is impossible to replicate the content our sessions and 'make up' the assignments, your grade will be affected, should you fail to make it to class. Each unexcused absence will result in a lowering of your final grade by five points. Two unexcused absences will result in a failing grade for the course. Also, a habit of lateness will adversely affect your grade, so be on time.

**Instructor's Attendance:** I will be commuting from Portland. Should there be inclement weather and I cannot make it to campus, I will conduct an on-line chat using First Class [or Blackboard] that all will log onto during our scheduled class time. The mid-term exam will be conducted on-line.

### **Responses to Readings (due each week in journal):**

As a journal is a subjective tool, there is not a proscribed way of tracking ideas and recording insights. The only stipulations are that (a) the journal is used exclusively for seminar material (b) it contains a weekly summary of each of the assigned readings and (c) you use it to take class notes in. As the length of the articles varies greatly, try to make the length of your responses proportionate. The format is something you decide upon for yourself. You may want to record a series of passages and map the 'argument' an author is presenting, or cite a quotation that you find intriguing or problematic. In your writing, please try to find connections between the different readings for each week (i.e., how do they 'speak' to one another?). Essentially, the journal provides evidence of the effort and thought you have put into the class. Don't fall behind in entries; I'll take notice of how they're utilized throughout the semester! I will collect them in week 07 and return them after Spring Break. You are exempt from having to log any entries weeks 1, 6 13 and 14. No writing is due over Spring Break, but there *are* readings to cover. Please try to write legibly.

### **Grading:**

**Each weighted as one fourth of the final grade (25 points/assignment for a total of 100 points). Note: No final examination for this course.**

**Mid-term Examination [on-line]**

**Weekly Responses in Journal**

**Class Participation [Includes Attendance]**

**Quality of Assigned Forum**

**STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES:** If you have special needs as addressed by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and need assistance, please notify the instructor immediately after the first meeting. Every reasonable effort will be made to accommodate your needs.

# Theory & Criticism ARH 351

Suggestions for entries in Journal

UNIVERSITY of MAINE

1] Summarize the major point or points of the essay.

2] What are the primary strengths of the author's argument/position?

3] What are the main weaknesses of the author's argument/position?

4] What is the relevance of the essay to current practices in Art, Art History or Art Education. [Choose the area related to your major.]

5] What is your personal response to the essay and how does it relate to your own thinking about art?