

Art and Context: The Cold War

INSTRUCTOR

Dr. Eric M. Stryker
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OFFICE HOURS

immediately after class

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course will provide an international survey of modern art between the years 1940 and 1970. The post-war development of modernist, formalist, figurative, realist and anti-modernist art will be studied in social historical context with particular attention to cultural impact of the Second World War, the ideological conflicts and geo-politics of the Cold War, and the social and political upheaval of the 1960s. Each of these will be shown to be dynamically involved in the art of the period. Specific attention will be also given to relevant histories of gender, sexual, racial, regional and national identity in both America and the industrialized nations of the world (specifically Britain, France, Germany, Italy, the Soviet Union and Japan.)

COURSE BENEFITS

- Students will gain detailed knowledge of the *global* art history in the mid-20th Century.
- Students will learn about the ways the Second World War and the Cold War affected artistic cultures and popular cultures – and the difficult relationship between the two.
- Students will study the various ways of thinking about images generated in those historical periods - an age of skepticism, paranoia, anxiety, but also utopianism, aspiration and ambition.
- Students will learn how the geopolitics of the Cold War (an era famed for spying, secrecy and opacity) gave way to the political promotion of American art, culture and ideas abroad – and the Soviet promotion of its culture, vice-versa. This includes things such as the involvement of government agencies and politicians sponsoring in the clandestine promotion of specific art forms and ideas.
- Most of all, students will have an opportunity to reflect on how the culture and art of these years reflect the rising “superpower” status of America (and Russia) - something that has a lasting effect in the present day.

UNIVERSITY CURRICULUM

This course satisfies the following UC requirements:

- Historical Contexts II
- Creativity and Aesthetics II

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Specific learning objectives for this course are:

- Students will be able to analyze both secondary and primary historical evidence.
- Students will be able to develop and support extended historical discussions in their own prose, based both on critical understanding of specific historical problems and on evaluation of secondary and primary evidence.
- Students will be able to analyze and construct clear and well-supported interpretations of creative works.
- Students will be able to evaluate sources and analyze the role and value of creative works to the cultures (context) that create and adopt them.

INSTRUCTOR BIO

Dr. Eric M. Stryker is an assistant professor of modern and contemporary art history at SMU, with particular focus on the British and European art in the middle of the Twentieth Century. His research interests focus on the intertwined relationship between modernism, urbanism, cultural geography and social history. Publications include writings on Richard Long and the geography of the British empire; Eduardo Paolozzi's figurative sculpture in relationship to the rebuilding of post-WWII London; and the relationship between blitzkrieg and abstract art during WWII. He was curator of an exhibition of British print culture's engagement with landscape and topography at the Yale Center of British Art and chaired an international conference on international visual culture during the Second World War, also at Yale University. His forthcoming book is *Transitional Spaces: Figuration in Post-War England*.

REGISTRATION

This is a mid-level course in art history, open to undergraduate art history majors and non-majors. There are no pre-requisites to the class. However, the class assumes a basic knowledge of 20th Century world history. If this is a concern for you, please consult with the instructor or teaching assistant.

READINGS

There are 6-7 short readings (extracts from primary sources) for each class meeting. They are all taken from one textbook, available on reserve at Hamon Library, or for purchase at the SMU Bookstore.

- Charles Harrison (ed.) *Art In Theory 1900-2000: An Anthology of Changing Ideas*, ISBN 978-0631227083

Please note that readings are mandatory. Although we may refer to the text from time to time, lectures will not summarize the readings. It is important, therefore, to do the readings carefully and take notes in preparation for the exams.

PAPER

One seven page thesis-driven paper on single work by an artist viewed in person in one of the DFW-area museums. The paper will ask for formal analysis of the work combined with research to place the work in historical context, showing the relationship between context and the visual qualities of the object.

Full detail and an object list for the assignments will be provided at a later date.

Late submissions will be marked down one letter grade per each day overdue. Papers that do not meet basic formatting guidelines will be returned to the student ungraded and must be submitted, subject to a late penalty. Extensions are granted in only in the case of special circumstances. If you do not submit a paper, you will receive a 0 (zero).

EXAMS

There is one final exams, a digital "take-home" exam. It will be primarily image-based. Students are expected to identify and respond substantively to images in short essay format. The final exam will also include a long essay question. In addition to images from the readings, study images from the lectures will be provided online. Students are responsible for both material from lectures and from the readings.

CLASS ATTENDANCE

Attendance at the lectures/discussions is mandatory. If you have concerns regarding your ability to attend, please contact the instructor or teaching assistant.

In order to comply with SMU's policy that some measure of attendance in all classes, we will circulate sign-in sheets on random days and spot-check attendance. If you are not present for a quiz, you will be marked absent. Similarly, if you are not in class to receive your graded work, you will be marked absent. Three *unexcused absences* will result in you being dropped from this course.

EXCUSED ABSENCES

Excused absence requests should be submitted in advance of the class directly to the teaching assistant. With notification prior to class, excused absences will be granted in the event of family emergencies, funerals, medical situations, and the following special circumstances:

Seniors conducting job interviews should make their best effort to schedule interviews at times outside class hours. If a conflict is unavoidable, the excused absence should be requested far in advance of class.

Religiously observant students wishing to be absent on holidays that require missing class should notify the instructor in writing at the beginning of the semester, and should discuss with them, in advance, acceptable ways of making up any work missed because of the absence.
(See University Policy No. 1.9.)

Students participating in an officially sanctioned, scheduled University extracurricular activity are given the opportunity to make up class assignments or other graded assignments missed as a result of their participation. It is the responsibility of the student to make arrangements with the instructor prior to any missed scheduled examination or other missed assignment for making up the work. (University Undergraduate Catalogue)

In all cases, if the *excused absence* occurs on a quiz day, no grade will be given and the quiz will be omitted from the final grade calculations. However, make-up quizzes are not offered. *If you are missing class, you are strongly encouraged to obtain from fellow students notes from missed lectures, or to come to office hours to discuss missed lecture material.*

ACADEMIC ETHICS

Students are expected to abide by the SMU Honor Code at all times.

(See www.smu.edu/studentlife/PCL_05_HC.asp)

If you have questions about how the Honor Code applies to your work in this course, please contact the instructor.

DISABILITY ACCOMMODATIONS

Students needing academic accommodations for a disability must first contact Ms. Rebecca Marin, Coordinator, Services for Students with Disabilities (214-768-4557) to verify the disability and establish eligibility for accommodations. They should then schedule an appointment with the instructor to make appropriate arrangements. (See University Policy No. 2.4.)

GRADE DISTRIBUTION

Paper	40%
Final Exam	40%
Class Participation	20%

FINAL GRADE CALCULATION

A numerical system is used to calculate final grades. Exams will be graded on the 100 point scale. However, the paper is graded on a letter grade basis. At the end of term, these are converted into numeric values as follows:

A	95
A-	91
B+	88
B	85
C+	78
C	75
C-	71
D+	68
D	65
D-	61
F	55
Nothing submitted	0

SCHEDULE

Day 1

Totalitarian Art, Realism and Abstraction

Main Topics: Nazi Art, Soviet Art, Socialist and Social Realism

Artists:

Josef Albers	Adolph Wissel	Ernst Liebermann
Hubert Lanzinger	Norman Rockwell	Diego Rivero
David Siquiros	Tsvetkov	Kupriyanov
Khorzhev	Popkov	Simonov
Pimenov	Neizvestny	Andre Fougeron
Peter de Francia	John Bratby	Frank Auerbach

Film clips:

- Leni Riefenstahl, *Triumph des Willens*
- Alexander Zarkhi, *Vysota*

Readings:

- Greenberg "Avant-Garde and Kitch" p.529 (AIT)
- Hitler "Speech Inaugerating the Great Exhibition of German Art" p.423 (AIT)
- Lenin "On Proletarian Culture" p.383 (AIT)
- Breton, Rivera and Trotsky "Towards a Free Revolutionary Art" p.526 in Harrison (ed.) *Art In Theory* (AIT)
- Fougeron "The Painter on his Battlement" p.652 (AIT)
- Rosenberg "The Fall of Paris" p.541 (AIT)

Day 2

European Figuration, Existentialism and Socialism

Main Topics: Art Autre, "Existentialist Art" and Base Materialism

Artists:

Eduardo Paolozzi	Henry Moore	Graham Sutherland
Francis Bacon	Jean Fautrier	Jean Dubuffet
Alberto Giacometti		

Readings:

- Moore "The Sculptor in Modern Society" p.669 (AIT)
- Bacon, Sylvester "Interview with David Sylvester" p.625 (AIT)
- Tapies "An Other Art" p.612 (AIT)
- Bataille "from the Critical Dictionary" p.474 (AIT)
- Dubuffet "Crude Art Preferred to Cultural Art" p.593 (AIT)
- Sartre "Existentialism and Humanism" p.587 (AIT)

Day 3

The New York School and Cold War America

Main Topics: Abstract Expressionism, Gestural Painting, Post-Surrealist Art, Women in the New York School

Artists:

Andre Masson	Roberto Matta	Arshile Gorky
Adolph Gottlieb	Isamu Noguchi	Lee Bontecou
Louise Bourgeois	Jackson Pollock	Willem de Kooning
Franz Kline	Robert Motherwell	Lee Krasner
Grace Hartigan	Louise Nevelson	

Film/TV clips:

- David Hand (dir.), Disney, *Bambi*
- Hans Namuth, *Jackson Pollock Painting*
- Ford Company, 1955 Television Advertisement

Readings:

- Gottlieb "Statement" p.564 (AIT)
- Greenberg "Towards a Newer Laocoon" p.554 (AIT)
- Greenberg "After Abstract Expressionism" p.766 (AIT)
- Pollock "Answers to a Questionnaire" p.560 (AIT)
- Rosenberg "The American Action Painters" p.581 (AIT)
- Rosenberg "The Question of What is Left Open" p.649 (AIT)

Day 4

The New York School as Global Export

Main Topics: Gestural Sculpture, Abstract Expressionism in the American West, Post-War "School of Paris", the Gutai Group, Vienna Actionism

Artists:

David Smith	Alexander Calder	Antony Caro
Clyfford Still	Richard Diebenkorn	David Park
Nathan Oliveira	Jiro Yoshihara	Atsuko Tanaka
Kazuo Shiraga	Shozo Shimamoto	Pierre Soulages
Jean-Paul Riopelle	Jean Miotte	Georges Matthieu
Jean Tinguely	Herman Nitsch	

Film clip:

- Alexander Calder, *Calder's Circus*
- John Ford, *The Searchers*

Readings:

- Smith "Tradition and Identity" p.748 (AIT)
- Still "Statement" p.580 (AIT)
- Dondero "From the Congressional Record" p.654 (AIT)
- Schlesinger "From The Politics of Freedom" p.658 (AIT)
- Barr "Is Modern Art Communistic?" p.660 (AIT)
- Restany "The New Realists" p.711 (AIT)

Day 5

Pure Abstraction and American Empire

Main Topics: Color Field Painting, Post-Painterly Abstraction, Corporate Modernism, Minimalism and Process Art

Artists:

Hans Hoffman	Barnett Newman	Mark Rothko
Helen Frankenthaler	Morris Louis	Kenneth Noland
Ellsworth Kelly	Anges Martin	Brice Marden
Ad Reinhardt	Frank Stella	Donald Judd
Carl Andre	Tony Smith	Richard Serra
Robert Morris		

Film clips:

- Stanley Kubrick, *Dr Strangelove, or How I Learned to Stop Worrying and Love the Bomb*
- Hitchcock, *North by Northwest*
- Stanley Kubrick, *2001: A Space Odyssey*

Readings:

- Rothko "Statement" p.565 (AIT)
- Newman "The Sublime is Now" p.572 (AIT)
- Fried "Three American Painters" p.769 (AIT)
- Greenberg "Modernist Painting" p.754 (AIT)
- Reinhardt "Art as Art" p.807 (AIT)
- Fried "Shape as Form: Frank Stella's New Paintings" p.775 (AIT)
- Judd "Specific Objects" p.809 (AIT)

Day 6

Abstraction, National Identity and Historical Memory

Main Topics: Nouveau-Realisme, Spatialism, Arte Povera, Zero Gruppe

Artists:

Yves-Klein	Otto Piene	Heinz Mack
Günther Uecker	Lucio Fontana	Alberto Burri

Readings:

- Merleau-Ponty "Eye and Mind" p.750 (AIT)
- Klein "Sorbonne Lecture" p.803 (AIT)
- Fontana "The White Manifesto" p.642 (AIT)
- Manzoni "Free Dimension" p.709 (AIT)
- Celant "Art Povera" p.886 (AIT)
- Kosuth "Art After Philosophy" p.840 (AIT)

Day 7

Mass Media in American Art and Culture

Main Topics: Black Mountain Artists, Pop Art, Happenings

Artists:

Robert Rauschenberg	Jasper Johns	Ed Kienholz
Wallace Berman	John Chamberlain	Jay deFeo
Claes Oldenburg	Jim Dine	Allan Kaprow
Andy Warhol	Roy Lichtenstein	James Rosenquist

Film clips:

- Nicholas Ray, *Rebel without a Cause*
- Andy Warhol: *Sleep* and *Screentests*

Readings:

- Cage "On Robert Rauschenberg, Artist, and his Work" p.717 (AIT)
- Johns "Interview with David Sylvester" p.721 (AIT)
- Kaprow "Assemblages, Environments, Happenings" p.703 (AIT)
- Oldenburg "I am for an Art. . ." p.727 (AIT)
- Lichtenstein "Lecture to the College Art Association" p.734 (AIT)
- McLuhan "From Understanding Media" p.739 (AIT)
- Warhol "Interview with Gene Swenson" p.730 (AIT)

Day 8

Paper Due

Pop Art and "The Popular" in Global Art

Main Topics: British Pop Art, German Capitalist Realism, Fluxus, Situationists

Artists:

Richard Hamilton	David Hockney	Conrad Lueg
Sigmar Polke	George Maciunas	George Brecht
Dick Higgins	AY-O	Guy Debord
Asger Jorn	Constant Nieuwenhuys	

Readings:

- Alloway "The Arts and the Mass Media" p.700 (AIT)
- Hamilton "For the Finest Art, Try Pop" p.726 (AIT)
- Debord "Writings from the Situationist International" p.693 (AIT)
- Jorn "Forms Conceived as Language" p.651 (AIT)
- Constant "Our Own Desires Build the Revolution" p.650 (AIT)
- Beuys "Not Just a Few are Called, But Everyone" p.889 (AIT)

Final Exam

This is a Digital "Take-Home" Exam