

Contemporary Art&Theory

Instructor: Dr Ewa Bobrowska

Pre-seminar: 45 hours,

Wednesday 3.30 pm - 5.45 pm

This course is open to all students, both international and Polish, who wish to discuss contemporary art in English.

This course surveys the diverse projects of postmodern art in the light of contemporary American art theory. The course will be composed of two parts: **field trips to Warsaw galleries (first part)**, and a **close examination of major theoretical statements on postmodern art (second part)**, the overall aim being to trace some of the conceptual threads that run through current artworks and art criticism.

During the first weeks we will try to explore the current Polish artscape while visiting the most prominent galleries in Warsaw and meeting their curators. /Centre for Contemporary Art, National Gallery of Art, Museum of Modern Art, The Zachęta Gallery, Galeria Foksal, National Museum, etc./

The following theoretical part will be structured as discussion-oriented classes. We will refer to philosophical papers focused on the contemporary state of art criticism and theory, with the emphasis on present American and French aesthetics. We will read articles by: Jacques Derrida, Jean-François Lyotard, Fredric Jameson, Richard Rorty, Michel Foucault, Ihab Hassan, Jean-Luc Nancy, Arthur Danto, George Dickie, and Scott Lash. Each student will be required to take part in a short group presentation of a selected text followed by an open class discussion.

The aim of the seminar is to introduce students to the most significant theoretical statements concerning the current state of art and prepare them to carry out further research in the field.

During the Covid-19 pandemic's restrictions period, this will be an e-learning online course on the Google Classroom platform.

Course Requirements:

Regular attendance and participation - both parts:

- 1/ Group (of 3-4 students) presentation of one selected philosophical paper,
- 2/ Short presentation of a notable/selected artist from one's country

Active participation in class discussions is an important element of the final grade

Students are expected to have completed the necessary reading prior to each meeting of the class.

Reading list:

1. Jean-François Lyotard, *Answering the Question: What Is Postmodernism?*, [in:] Docherty, Thomas, ed. *Postmodernism: A Reader*. New York: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1993. pp. 35-46, *The Postmodern Condition A Report on Knowledge*.
2. David Wood, *Trees_and_Truth_Our_Uncanny_Arboreality*
3. Dawid Wood, *Thinking With Cats*.
4. Jacques Derrida, "Differance" [in:] *A Derrida Reader: Between the Blinds*, New York 1991, pp. 59 – 80, Derrida on Lichtensteiger.de.
- 4 Jacques Derrida, *The Truth in Painting*, Chicago 1987, pp. 81 -114.
5. Jacques Derrida, *On Cosmopolitanism and Forgiveness*, Routledge, 2001.
6. Richard Rorty, "Private Irony and Liberal Hope" [in:]: *Contingency, Irony, and Solidarity*, Cambridge 1989, pp.73 -95.
7. Artur Danto, *Bruce Nauman*, "The Nation" May 8, 1995.
8. Artur Danto, *"The Original Creative Principle": Motherwell and Psychic Automatism*, in(1997) *Robert Motherwell on Paper*, pub. Harry N. Abrams.
9. Scott Lash, *Economies of Signs and Space*, London 1996.
10. *Jasper Johns, Gray* The Art Institute of Chicago, Yale University Press, New Heaven and London, 2007.
11. Jeffrey Weiss, *Marc Rothko*, National Gallery of Art Washington, Yale University Press, 1998.
12. J.-F. Lyotard, "Philosophy and Painting in the Age of Their Experimentation", in *The Lyotard Reader*, Andrew Benjamin, editor. Oxford, UK, and Cambridge, MA: Blackwell Publishers, 1992.
13. Richard Rorty, "Private Irony and Liberal Hope" [in:]: *Contingency, Irony, and Solidarity*, Cambridge 1989, pp.73 -95.
14. Jean-Luc Nancy, *Corpus*, Fordham University Press, 2008.
15. Jean-Luc Nancy, *Pleasure in Drawing*, Fordham, New York 2013.
16. Jean-Luc Nancy, *Multiple Arts: The Muses II*, Stanford California 2006.
17. Michel Foucault, *Fearless Speech, Semiotext(e) 2001*.
18. Michel Foucault, *Panopticon* in *Discipline and Punish*.
19. Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *The Visible and the Invisible*, 1968.
20. Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *Eye and Mind*.
21. Jacques Derrida, *Death Penalty Seminars*, 2014.
22. Donna Haraway, *Laboratory Animals and Their People*, in: *When Species Meet*, U of Minnesota Press, 2008.