



## SYLLABUS

### ARH 354 CONTEMPORARY ART

**Instructor Name: Simone Ciglia**

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**Contact Hours: 40**

**UO Quarter Credits: 4**

**Language of instruction: English**

**LONDON, UK**

### **COURSE DESCRIPTION**

This course approaches the study of Contemporary Art intersecting its thematic dimensions with a chronological perspective from the 1940s to the present. We will explore a selection of some of the major artistic issues, trends, figures and critical problems in this historical arc, focusing on contemporary art's expansion toward a global perspective.

The topics we will consider include: the politics of Modernism in the United States and Europe in the aftermath of World War II; the Duchampian legacy in the conjunction of Rauschenberg and Johns; the crisis of the artist's persona; the relationship between art and commodity culture, the blurring of the boundaries between art and life; the retreat of Modernism and the emergence of a minimalist aesthetic; the questioning of the art object and the move to conceptualism; postmodernism and its theory and practice in the 1980s; global aesthetics; and the evolutions of the art system in the new millennium. These themes will mirror some of the major artistic trends of this period, such as Abstract Expressionism, *Informel*, Neo Dada, Pop Art, Fluxus, Minimal Art, Conceptual Art, Performance Art, Process Art, Arte Povera, Land Art, Institutional Critique, Neo-expressionism, and Relational Aesthetics.

This course will devote special attention to the context of the United Kingdom and contemporary British art.

### **COURSE OBJECTIVES**

By the end of the course, students should be able to:

- Learn how to read and interpret contemporary art and to contextualize it within history;
- Learn to write an argument about contemporary art and apply theoretical arguments to visual analysis of contemporary art;
- Learn to use information provided in galleries and museums, to make visual analysis both in oral and written form as well as recognize and understand materials and media.
- Practice respectful listening and civil conversation as critical tools for collective student engagement with topics that are controversial today;
- Develop critical vocabulary and concepts that will allow you to engage and discuss topics with which you may be unfamiliar.

## INSTRUCTIONAL METHODOLOGY

This course consists of a three-week on-site component in London combined with preparatory work before and a reflection after the trip. Class time in London is divided between daily site-visits to museums, galleries, and public art/design exhibitions/events and classroom discussions. Our site visits, tours, and guest lectures will give you access to major art and design venues and art professionals and practitioners. You will also explore London-based exhibitions independently, and do writing assignments connecting its themes with those of the broader themes of contemporary art from our texts.

## METHOD OF EVALUATION (GRADING)

Students will be required to complete:

3 x weekly reflection papers (600-700 words)	25%
1 x class presentation	25%
1 x final written assignment (once back from London)	25%
Attendance and participation	25%

## COURSE OUTLINE AND COURSE READINGS

See attached timetable from GEO London for times and locations of specific events each day. Please note that syllabus is subject to change.

Class content/events	Readings and Assignments
<i>Week 1</i>	Bring a journal/notebook to class and to all events
<b><u>Mon. July 29</u></b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Orientation</li></ul>	
<b><u>Tue. July 30</u></b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Intercultural awareness</li><li>• Classes at GEO (Basement)</li><li>• Visit: British Museum, including curator talk in the Americas Galleries</li></ul>	<b>See</b> <a href="https://www.britishmuseum.org/">https://www.britishmuseum.org/</a>
<b><u>Wed. July 31</u></b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Classes at GEO (Basement)</li><li>• “How to read a painting” with Christopher Cook (Basement)</li><li>• Visit: Royal Academy, including talk with artist Bob and Roberta Smith</li></ul>	<b>See</b> <a href="https://www.royalacademy.org.uk/">https://www.royalacademy.org.uk/</a>
<b><u>Thu. Aug 1</u></b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Classes at GEO (Basement)</li><li>• Visit: National Gallery, including guided Highlights tour</li></ul>	<b>See</b> <a href="https://www.nationalgallery.org.uk/">https://www.nationalgallery.org.uk/</a>

<p><b><u>Fri. Aug. 2</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Visit: John Soane Museum, including intro talk</li> </ul>	<p><b>Submit</b>  <u>Reflection Paper #1 Due on Canvas Sunday Aug. 4</u></p>
<p><b><u>Week 2</u></b></p>	
<p><b><u>Mon. Aug. 5</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Classes at GEO (Second floor)</li> <li>• Visit: Tate Britain</li> </ul>	<p><b>Read</b></p>
<p><b><u>Tue. Aug. 6</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Visit: Rochester Square with artist Salvatore Arancio</li> <li>• Visit: Tate Modern, including Yoko Ono exhibition</li> <li>• Concert: Pat Thomas plays Duke Ellington, Café Oto</li> </ul>	<p><b>See</b>  <a href="https://www.rochestersquare.co.uk/">https://www.rochestersquare.co.uk/</a></p> <p><b>Read</b>  Tate Modern Yoko Ono exhibition guide  <a href="https://www.tate.org.uk/whats-on/tate-modern/yoko-ono/exhibition-guide">https://www.tate.org.uk/whats-on/tate-modern/yoko-ono/exhibition-guide</a></p>
<p><b><u>Wed. Aug. 7</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Brick Lane walking tour with Amanda Milburn</li> <li>• Visit: Whitechapel Gallery - Peter Kennard: Archive of Dissent</li> <li>• Guided tour of the Gilbert and George Centre</li> </ul>	<p><b>Read</b>  Peter Kennard Exhibition Notes:  <a href="https://www.whitechapelgallery.org/exhibitions/peter-kennard-archive-of-dissent/">https://www.whitechapelgallery.org/exhibitions/peter-kennard-archive-of-dissent/</a></p> <p><b>See</b>  <a href="https://gilbertandgeorgecentre.org/">https://gilbertandgeorgecentre.org/</a></p>
<p><b><u>Thurs. Aug. 8</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Return to Brick Lane – Urban dérive</li> <li>• Classes at GEO (First floor)</li> <li>• Visit: Courtauld Gallery</li> <li>• Theater: Mnemonic, National Theatre</li> </ul>	
<p><b><u>Fri. Aug. 9</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Day trip: Liverpool</li> </ul>	<p><b>Submit</b>  <u>Reflection Paper #2 Due on Canvas Sunday Aug. 11</u></p>
<p><b><u>Week 3</u></b></p>	
<p><b><u>Mon. Aug. 12</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Classes at GEO (Second floor)</li> <li>• Visit: Victoria &amp; Albert Museum</li> </ul>	<p><b>See</b>  <a href="https://www.vam.ac.uk/">https://www.vam.ac.uk/</a></p>
<p><b><u>Tue. Aug. 13</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Visit: Photographer's gallery</li> </ul>	<p><b>See</b>  <a href="https://designmuseum.org/">https://designmuseum.org/</a>  <a href="https://designmuseum.org/exhibitions/enzo-mari">https://designmuseum.org/exhibitions/enzo-mari</a></p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Visit: Design Museum, including guided tour of the exhibition “Enzo Mari”</li> </ul>	
<b><u>Wed. Aug. 14</u></b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hyde Park public art</li> <li>• Visit: Serpentine Galleries</li> </ul>	<b>See</b> <a href="https://www.serpentinegalleries.org/">https://www.serpentinegalleries.org/</a>
<b><u>Thu. Aug. 15</u></b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Classes at GEO (First floor)</li> <li>• Evening boat trip</li> </ul>	<b>Present</b> Response presentations in class
<b><u>Fri. Aug. 16</u></b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Free day</li> </ul>	<b>Submit</b> <u>Reflection Paper #3 Due on Canvas Sunday Aug. 18</u>

**Every class (whether on- or off-site) must be attended. Please refer to the GEO attendance policy for more details.**

### **COURSE READINGS**

The central text for the course is:

- Hopkins, David. *After Modern Art: 1945-2017*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018.

The UO Libraries have recently acquired an eBook copy of the textbook. This means there's no need for you to purchase the textbook; it's conveniently available for free on the UO library website at the following link:

[After Modern Art : 1945-2017](#)Links to an external site.

Please finish reading this book before your departure to London to minimize the time spent reading on-site and maximize our time for visiting. Remember to bring the book with you (or have it available digitally) as we will need to reference it while in London.