

QUALITY MATERIAL ---

CAREFUL INSPECTION --

GOOD WORKMANSHIP.

ALL COMBINED IN AN EFFORT TO  
GIVE YOU A PERFECT PAINTING.

University of Texas at Dallas  
Arts & Humanities  
Fall 2013

Contemporary Art History  
AHST 3318-501

(88995)

Dr. Charissa N. Terranova

W 7:00-9:45

AH2 1.204

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Office Hours: Wednesday 4:00-6:45

Office Location: JO 3.920

John Baldessari, *Quality Material*, 1966–68

### Description:

This course offers a survey of the history of contemporary art, 1948-present. Through the theme of “dematerialization” we will focus on the shift from art-as-object to art-as-experience, looking to dada, neo-dada, gestural painting, performance, happenings, sound experimentation, early computer art, art and the mass media, interactive art, new media art, and conceptualism.

### Goals and Outcomes:

- Define and understand contemporary art according to the theme of “dematerialization.”
- Define and understand conceptual and new media art.
- Identify the salient characteristics of contemporary art.
- Gain knowledge of the history and theory of contemporary art.
- Improve skills of public engagement and discourse in class.
- Improve research skills.
- Improve expository writing skills.

### Requirements:

Students are required to attend every class, complete all assignments (reading, writing, and exams), and participate with candor, verve, and commitment in class. **Students are allowed one unexcused absence after which each absence will result in the lowering of the final grade by one full letter. Students with illnesses that require extended periods of absence are encouraged to officially withdraw from the class.**

### Reading Assignments:

All reading assignments are available through the library by way of a service called “docutek.”

The URL for AHST 3318.501 is: <http://utdallas.docutek.com/eres/coursepage.aspx?cid=1548>

Password: dance

### Writing Assignments: The Art Review

Assignment #1: Comparing Critical Voices

This assignment is intended to familiarize you with the voice of the art critic. Choose one of the two exhibitions below, locate three different reviews by three different critics, compare and contrast them, and finally choose the best of the three voices. Please print the reviews and staple them to the back of your review. Length: 600 words Format: double space, 10 or 12 pt font, title of your review underlined and located underneath course heading. Style: Please avoid personal statements in the first person, that

is, using “I”, such as “I think the show was beautiful.” Please avoid artspeak, exaggeration, and clichés, such as “The artist [or critic] is a genius.” **Due: October 2**

- Exhibition 1 *Gutai: Splendid Playground* at the Guggenheim Museum, NYC, February 15-May 8, 2013
- Exhibition 2 *Phenomenal: California Light, Space, Surface*, Museum of Contemporary Art San Diego, September 25, 2011-January 22, 2012

**Assignment #2: Review of Stephen Laphisophon: Concentrations 56** at the Dallas Museum of Art  
Using your knowledge of the critic’s voice, please write a review of this exhibition. Your review might discuss the successes or failures of the exhibition according to the artist’s work and its installation – how the DMA has worked with the artist to put pieces of art the exhibition space. You must visit the museum for this assignment. Length: 600 words Format: double space, 10 or 12 pt font, title of your review underlined and located underneath course heading. Style: Please avoid personal statements in the first person, that is, using “I”, such as “I think the show was beautiful.” Please avoid artspeak, exaggeration, and clichés, such as “The artist [or critic] is a genius.” **Due: November 6**

**Assignment #3: Review of Robert Smithson in Texas** at the Dallas Museum of Art.  
Using your knowledge of the critic’s voice, please write a review of this exhibition. Your review might discuss the successes or failures of the exhibition according to the artist’s work and its installation – how the DMA has worked with the artist to put pieces of art the exhibition space. You must visit the museum for this assignment. Length: 600 words Format: double space, 10 or 12 pt font, title of your review underlined and located underneath course heading. Style: Please avoid personal statements in the first person, that is, using “I”, such as “I think the show was beautiful.” Please avoid artspeak, exaggeration, and clichés, such as “The artist [or critic] is a genius.” **Due: December 4**

**Exams:**

The mid-term exam is Wednesday October 16 and the final exam is TBA. Each will require you to identify 20 slides and answer short essay questions. There will be a review sheet disseminated at least one week prior to each exam. All slide lectures are located at [www.charissaterranova.com](http://www.charissaterranova.com). Click the “syllabi” icon to the left on the home page.

**NOTE ON DATES: There are absolutely no make-up exams for people who mis-schedule the exam. I do not accept late papers.**

**Grades:**

Written Assignment #1	20%
Written Assignment #2	20%
Written Assignment #3	20%
Mid-Term Exam	20%
Final Exam	<u>20%</u>
TOTAL	100%

**Standard UTD policies regarding classroom behavior, religious holidays, withdrawals, etc.:**

- <http://www.utdallas.edu/deanofstudents/conductguidelines.html>
- <http://provost.utdallas.edu/>
- <http://www.charissaterranova.com/syllabi/utd-policies.htm>

**Schedule:**

**Wednesday August 28 Introduction to Themes**

**Dematerialization: Conceptual Art and the Rise of New Media Art**

**Wednesday September 4 From Drip to Dance: Abstract Expressionism and the Rise of the Happening**

- Collins, Bradford R., "Life Magazine and the Abstract Expressionists, 1948-51: A Historiographic Study of a Late Bohemian Enterprise," *Art Bulletin*, Vol. 73, No. 2 (Jun., 1991) 283-308
- Kaprow, Allan, "The Legacy of Jackson Pollock," 1-9
- Kaprow, Allan, "Happenings in the New York Scene," 15-26

**Wednesday September 11 The Flatbed Picture Plane: American Pop!**

- Steinberg, Leo "The Flatbed Picture Plane," excerpt from *Other Criteria*  
<http://web.mit.edu/allanmc/www/othercriteria.pdf>
- Bergin, Paul, "Andy Warhol: The Artist as Machine," 359-363

**Wednesday September 25 British Pop! The Independent Group and French Pop! Nouveau Réalisme**

- Massey, Anne, "The Independent Group: Towards a Redefinition," *The Burlington Magazine*, Vol. 129, No. 1009 (Apr., 1987) 232-242.
- Cone, Michèle C., "Pierre Restany and the Nouveaux Réalistes" *Yale French Studies*, No. 98, The French Fifties (2000) 50-65.

**Wednesday September 25 Site Visit: The Warehouse  
The Splendid Playground of Japanese Art: Mona-ha and the Gutai Group**

- Kee, Joan, "Situating a Singular Kind of 'Action': Early Gutai Painting, 1954-57," *Oxford Art Journal*, Vol. 26, No. 2 (2003) 123-140

**Wednesday October 2 John Cage, Fluxus, and Intermedia**

- Brill, Dorothea, "Shock and the Senseless in Fluxus," 98-149
  - Higgins, Dick, "Statement on Intermedia," <http://artpool.hu/Fluxus/Higgins/intermedia2.html>
- Assignment #1 Due**

**Wednesday October 9 The Earth as Palette: Land Art and Earthworks  
and California Light and Space Movement**

- Kastner, Jeffrey, "Survey," in *Land and Environmental Art*, 18-43
- Smithson, Robert, *The Collected Writings*, 7-23
- Kohn, Adrian, "Works and Words," in *Phenomenal: California Light, Space, Surface*, 152-171  
[http://www.massart.edu/Documents/www.massart.edu/faculty\\_bios/4\\_Work\\_and\\_Words.pdf](http://www.massart.edu/Documents/www.massart.edu/faculty_bios/4_Work_and_Words.pdf)

**Wednesday October 16 Mid-Term Examination**

**Wednesday October 23 Perception in Motion: Op, New Tendency and GRAV**

- Houston, Joe, ed. *Optic Nerve: Perceptual Art of the 1960s*, 39-76
- Rosin, Margit, "The Art of Programming: The New Tendencies and the Arrival of the Computer as a Means of Artistic Research," 27-42

**Wednesday October 30 Waste Land with Vik Muniz [video]**

**Wednesday November 6 The Rise of the Digital Image in Art: The Bell Labs, A. Michael Noll, and E.A.T.**

- Noll, A. Michael, "The Beginnings of Computer Art in the United States: A Memoir," 39-44
  - Vasulka, Woody, "Experiments in Art and Technology: A Brief History and Summary of Major Projects 1966-1998," <http://www.vasulka.org/archive/Writings/EAT.pdf>
- Written Assignment #2 Due**

**Wednesday November 6 What is Conceptual Art? Dematerialization between Language and the Computer**

- Lippard, Lucy R. and John Chandler, "The Dematerialization of Art," in *Conceptual Art a Critical Anthology*, pp. 46-52
- Jack Burnham, "Systems Esthetics," *Artforum*, Vol. 7, No. 1 (Sept 1968) 30-35
- Jack Burnham, "Real Time Systems," *Artforum*, Vol. 8, No. 1 (Sept 1969) 49-55

**Wednesday November 13 Bodies in Action I: Feminism in Art**

- Miriam Schapiro, "The Education of Women as Artists: Project Womanhouse," *Art Journal*, vol. 31, no. 3 (Spring 1972) 268-270.
- Mary Kelly and Paul Smith, "No Essential Femininity," in *The Art of Art History: A Critical Anthology*, Donald Preziosi, ed. 370-382.

**Wednesday November 20 Bodies in Action II: Gay Rights in Art and Towards a Progressive masculinity in Art**

- Peggy Phelan, "Serrano, Mapplethorpe, the NEA and You: 'Money Talks': October 1989," *TDR* (1988- ) Vol. 34, No. 1 (Spring 1990) pp. 4-15.
- Terranova, Charissa, "Machismo, Castration, Homophobia: A Progressive Politics of Masculinity in the Work of Gober, Barney, and McCarthy." *thresholds* 37. (Spring 2010) 20-30.

**Monday November 25 Fall Break/Thanksgiving**

**Wednesday November 27 Fall Break/Thanksgiving**

**Wednesday December 4 Conceptual Art and the Image: Pictures Generation and Painting**

- Crimp, Douglas, "Pictures," <http://www.clubblumen.at/media/crimp.pdf>
- Shone, Richard, "From 'Freeze' to House: 1988-94," *Sensation: Young British Artists from the Saatchi Collection*, ed. Norman Rosenthal, 12-25
- Schwabsky, Barry, "Painting in the Interrogative Mode," in *Vitamin P: New Perspectives in Painting*, 6-10
- McCollum, Allan, The Shapes Project, <http://theshapesproject.com>

**-Written Assignment #3 Due**

**Wednesday December 11 New Media Art and the Problematic of the Art Object**

- Paul, Christiane, "Challenges for a Ubiquitous Museum: Presenting and Preserving New," <http://www.mediaarthistory.org/refresh/Programmatic%20key%20texts/pdfs/Paul.pdf>