

# Art, Politics and Ideology

Course, School of Media

## Syllabus

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## About the course

This course looks at art in public space by drawing attention to how propaganda, economy and policy shape aesthetic and political identities. We will discuss the interweaving of art, politics and ideology ranging from cold war artistic production and movements such as abstract expressionism and social realism to recent contemporary art practices of social engagement, participation and activist art. The course critically revises the most important discussions and standpoints around the shift in the global visual art of the last decades towards expanded educational and socially engaged practices. Central to this shift is the post-1970s questioning, often coming from feminist and post-colonial perspectives, of traditional aesthetic categories for reproducing dominant ideologies and canons. Cultural production is mediated and evaluated by a variety of actors, cultural policy agendas, local communities and the public. The course will draw attention in such aspects of the economy of culture as well as on issues around gender, race, class, political economy and ideology. The students of this course will be equipped with critical knowledge around recent debates in the area of visual art, including films and video clips, and an understanding of the values and qualities of cultural activities, involving those taking place in official institutions such as museums, art fairs and biennials, or unofficial settings such as various subcultures and scenes.

## Content of the course

### 1. Week 1 Introduction to Art, Politics and Ideology

Geismar, Haidy. "What's in a price? An ethnography of tribal art at auction." *Journal of Material Culture* 6.1 (2001): 25-47.

Rampley, Matthew. "Art as a social system: the sociological aesthetics of Niklas Luhmann." *Telos* 148 (2009): 111-140.

Vickery, Jonathan. "Organising art: Constructing aesthetic value." *Culture and Organization* 12.1 (2006): 51-63.

Kopytoff, Igor. "The cultural biography of things: commoditization as process." *The social life of things: Commodities in cultural perspective* 68 (1986): 70-73.

### 2. Week 2 Art, Propaganda, Censorship

Hall, Stuart. "The West and the Rest: Discourse and power." (1992): 275-331.

Staal, Jonas. "Art. Democratism. Propaganda." (2014).

Roberts, John. "Realism, Modernism, and Photography: "At Last, at Last the Mask has been Torn Away". " *Adventures in Realism* (2007): 158-176.

### 3. Week 3 Contemporary Art and Activism

Chao, Jenifer. "The ignorant hip-hop artist? Political rap encounters Jacques Rancière in Paris's Sonic Jihad." *Continuum* 30.6 (2016): 754-763.

Harold, Christine. "Pranking rhetoric: "Culture jamming" as media activism." *Critical Studies in Media Communication* 21.3 (2004): 189-211.

Groys, Boris. "On art activism." *e-flux journal* 56 (2014): 1-14.

Sandlin, Jennifer A., and Jennifer L. Milam. "'Mixing pop (culture) and politics': Cultural resistance, culture jamming, and anti-consumption activism as critical public pedagogy." *Curriculum inquiry* 38.3 (2008): 323-350.

### 4. Week 4 Gender, Race and Class in Contemporary Art

Kuleva, Margarita. "Constructing Identities And Boundaries: Fashion And Clothing Of Working And Middle Class Youth In Contemporary Russia." (2015).

Kuleva, Margarita. "Cultural administrators as creative workers: the case of public and non-governmental cultural institutions in St. Petersburg." *Cultural Studies* 32.5 (2018): 727-746.

### 5. Week 5 International Art Biennials and Museums

Goff, Patricia M. "The Museum as a Transnational Actor." *Arts and International Affairs* (2017).

Bethwaite, Julia and Anni Kangas The Scales, Politics, and Political Economies of Contemporary Art Biennials. DOI: 10.18278/aia.2.3.6

Hilgers, Mathieu, and Eric Mangez. "Introduction to Pierre Bourdieu's theory of." *Bourdieu's theory of social fields: Concepts and applications* (2014): 1.

### 6. Week 6 Art, Animals and the Question of the (Post) Human

Braidotti, Rosi. "Posthuman humanities." *European Educational Research Journal* 12.1 (2013): 1-19.

Goodall, Jane. "An order of pure decision: Un-natural selection in the work of Stelarc and Orlan." *Body & Society* 5.2-3 (1999): 149-170.

Nast, Heidi J. "Loving.... whatever: alienation, neoliberalism and pet-love in the twenty-first century." *ACME: An International E-Journal for Critical Geographies* 5.2 (2006): 300-327.

## **7. Week 7 Art as Policy, Diplomacy and Power**

Budraitskis, Ilya. 2017. "Contradictions in Russian Cultural Politics: Conservatism as an Instrument of Neoliberalism"/ The Art of Civil Action. Political Space and Cultural Dissent. Valiz, Amsterdam.

Jachec, Nancy. "Anti-communism at Home, Europeanism Abroad: Italian Cultural Policy at the Venice Biennale, 1948–1958." *Contemporary European History* 14.2 (2005): 193-217.

Gunther, Hans, ed. *The culture of the Stalin period*. Springer, 1990.

### **Final exam**

The final exam will be a written essay of 2.500 words, font Times New Roman, size 12 including references, footnotes and bibliography.

### **Grading**

The highest final grade is 10 and consists of 4 components:

#### **Attendance and participation 20%**

The students need to follow and lectures and show an active understanding of the things and issues they discuss.

#### **Critical analysis 20 %**

The students should write an one page review related to how a particular art work (or cluster of works) that they will choose from a list produce meaning, identities, political and moral standpoints, what they oppose/ affirm and so on.

#### **Presentation 20%**

The student needs to select one of the course readings and present in the class. The presentations should be around 10-15 min followed by a couple of questions.

## Final essay 40%

The student needs to discuss a theme from what is discussed in the class and of their liking and show familiarity with the theoretical debates and literature around this theme. They are marked according to the following criteria:

1. Argument and Theoretical Background
2. Structure and Organization
3. Language and Style.

## Course Bibliography

Adorno and Horkheimer (2002). *Dialectic of Enlightenment: Philosophical Fragments*, Redwood: Stanford University Press.

Amor, Mónica. 1997. Documenta X: Reclaiming the Political Project of the Avant-garde

Arjun Appadurai. 1986. The Social Life of Things: Commodities in Cultural Perspective

Banks, M., Hesmondhalgh, D. (2009), « Looking for Work in Creative Industries Policy », *International Journal of Cultural Policy*, Vol. 15, No. 4, November, pp.415-430.

Banks, Mark (2007) The Politics of Cultural Work

Becker, H. S. (1982). Art Worlds. Berkley: University of California Press, 1982.

Beller, Jonathan. 2007. *The cinematic mode of production: Attention economy and the society of the spectacle*.

Bishop, Claire. 2012. Artificial Hells: Participatory Art and the Politics of Spectatorship

Bourdieu, P. (1993). The Field of Cultural Production: Essays on Art and Literature, Washington DC: Columbia University Press, 1993

Bourdieu. 1984. The Production of Belief: Contribution to an Economy of Symbolic Goods

Brian O'Doherty. 1973. Inside the White Cube: The Ideology of the Gallery Space

Castells M. (2000). The Rise of The Network Society: The Information Age: Economy, Society and Culture, London: Wiley.

Caves, R. (2000). Creative Industries. Contracts between Art and Commerce, Harvard: Harvard University Press.

David Hesmondhalgh. 2007. The Cultural Industries

Esther Leslie. 2006. Add Value to Contents: the Valorisation of Culture Today

Hal Foster. 1998. Vision and Visuality

Hesmondhalgh D. and Baker S. (2011), *Creative Labour*. Abingdon and New York: Routledge.

Hesmondhalgh D. (2012), *The Cultural Industries*. 3rd edition. London, Los Angeles and New Delhi: Sage.

Howard Becker. 1984. Art Worlds

Jay, Martin. 2002. Cultural Relativism and the Visual Turn

- Jenkins, H. (2006), *Convergence Culture: Where Old and New Media Collide*, New York, NYU Press.
- Jenkins, H., (2001), « Convergence? I diverge », *MIT Technology Review*, June, 2001.
- Lash, S., & Lury, C., (2007), *Global Culture Industry*, Cambridge, UK, Polity Press.
- Luc Boltanski & Eve Chiapello. 2005. *The New Spirit of Capitalism*
- McRobbie, Angela. 2016. *Be creative: Making a living in the new culture industries*. John Wiley & Sons.
- MIEGE B. (1989). *The Capitalization of Cultural Production*, New York/Bagnolet, International General.
- O'Neill, Paul. 2012. *The Culture of Curating and the Curating of Culture (s)*
- Pedersen P. & B. Moeran. 2011. *Negotiating Values in the Creative Industries - Fairs, Festivals and Competitive Events* (eds.)
- Robert Hewison. 2014. *Cultural Capital: The Rise and Fall of Creative Britain*
- Throsby, T., (2001), *Economics and Culture*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.
- Unesco, (1982). *Cultural Industries : A Challenge for the Future of Culture*, Paris, Unesco 1982.
- Unesco, (1997). *International Unesco Symposium on Copyright and Communication in the Information Society (Madrid, 11-14 March 1996)*, Unesco, 1997, 307 pages.
- Wasko J., Murdock G. & Sousa H., (editors) (2011), *The Handbook of Political Economy of Communication*, Chichester UK, Wiley- Blackwell.