

**Merve Ertufan, Sena Başöz**  
**Contemporary Art - Course Syllabus**

**Course Description:**

This course will provide an overview of the origins and the development of Contemporary Art. Students will be introduced to predominant trends, concepts and mediums of the 20th and the 21st century through examples and discussions on artworks. We will focus on specific historical, institutional and cultural conditions that make up the backdrop of artistic production, as well as artist's role and agency in this process.

This course aims to equip the students with fundamental knowledge on Contemporary Art, and the necessary intellectual tools for them to be able to critically assess the age that they live in.

**Course requirements and Grading:**

%30 Regular attendance, class participation

%30 Midterm Presentation

%40 Final Exam

Attendance is mandatory and will be monitored. You are expected to arrive on time, having read the weekly assigned readings for that class and prepared to participate in class discussions.

**Midterm:**

Midterm exam will be individual presentations. You will be expected to hand in your powerpoint in pdf format.

Week	Title
1	Introduction to the Class; An Overview
2	Modern Movements, Pre-1960s - I
3	Modern Movements, Pre-1960s - II
4	Nouveau réalisme, Arte Povera, Pop Art
5	Fluxus, Performance Art
6	Video Art
7	Midterm Presentations
8	Minimalism, Conceptual Art
9	Land Art, Neo-Pop, Neo-Conceptual Art
10	Field Trip
11	Post 1990's: Art Institutions
12	Post 1990's: Predominant Topics
13	New Media Art

## **Week 1: Introduction to the Class, an Overview**

### **Week 2: Modern Movements, Pre-1960s - I**

Overview of the Modern Movements; cultural, historical, and technological context for Contemporary Art

Required Reading: "On Becoming Revolutionary: Kazimir Malevich"; Boris Groys, e-flux journal #47

Recommended Reading: *'The Failure and Success of Cézanne'*; Nineteenth Century Art, A Critical History; Thames & Hudson; pg 397-402

Key Artists: Cézanne, Picasso, Monet, Van Gogh, Manet; Munch, Kandinsky, Malevich, Pollock

### **Week 3: Modern Movements, Pre-1960s - II**

Overview of the Modern Movements; cultural, historical, and technological context for Contemporary Art.

Required Reading: *'The Vision Machine'*, pg: 1-3; Paul Virilio; The British Film Institute and Indiana University Press, 1994.

*'Apropos of "Readymades"'*; Marcel Duchamp; 1961.

Recommended Reading: *'Photography, Modernity, and Art'*; Nineteenth Century Art, A Critical History; Thames & Hudson; pg 241-250

Key Artists: Early Photography (Niépce, Daguerre, Atkins, Bayard, Fox Talbot); Marcel Duchamp

### **Week 4: Nouveau Réalisme, Arte Povera, Pop Art**

Early Contemporary Art, the avant-garde of 1960s.

Required Reading: '1960a: Nouveau Réalisme'; Art Since 1900; pg 434-438

Recommended Reading: '1960c: American Pop Art'; Art Since 1900; pg 445-449  
'1964b: Warhol', Art Since 1900, pg 486-491

Key Artists: Nouveau Réalisme (Yves Klein, Arman); Arte Povera (Antoni Tapies, Piero Manzoni, Michelangelo Pistoletto); Pop Art (Andy Warhol, Claes Oldenburg, Robert Rauschenberg, Jasper Johns)

### **Week 6: Fluxus, Performance Art**

Required Reading: '1962a: Fluxus'; Art Since 1900; pg 456 - 463.

Key Artists: Fluxus (John Cage, Dadaism, Marcel Duchamp, Allan Kaprow, Joseph Beuys, Fluxkits); Performance Art (Yoko Ono, Valie Export, Vito Acconci, Chris Burden, Ulay & Abramovic)

### **Week 6: Video Art**

Required Reading: '1973: Early Video Art'; Art Since 1900; pg 560 - 564.

Recommended Reading: *'The Aesthetics of Narcissism'*; Rosalind Krauss; October Mag; 1976.

*'Immaterial Projections Interfering in Darkened Sites and Immersing the Viewer'*; Video Art Theory: A Comparative Approach; Helen Westgeest; 2016; pg 104 - 109.

Key Artists: Ubuweb.com; Part - 1 (Wolf Vostell, Nam June Paik, Bruce Nauman); Part - 2 (Vito Acconci, Joan Jonas, Richard Serra, Peter Campus, Lynda Benglis); Part - 3 (Dan Graham, Yoko Ono, John Smith, Christian Marclay, Anri Sala, Fiona Tan, Janet Cardiff)

## **Week 7: Midterm Presentations**

### **Week 8: Minimalism, Conceptual Art**

Required Reading: 'Art-as-Art', Ad Reinhardt; <http://theoria.art-zoo.com/art-as-art-ad-reinhardt/> "Sentences on Conceptual Art"; Sol LeWitt, 1969.

Recommended Reading: 'Notes on Sculpture'; Robert Morris; Minimal Art: A Critical Anthology; 1966.

*'1968b: Conceptual Art'*; Art Since 1900; pg 527-533

Key Artists: Minimalism (Primary Structures(exh), Robert Morris, Donald Judd, Carl Andre, Sol LeWitt, Dan Flavin, Eva Hesse); Conceptual Art (Joseph Kosuth, Lawrence Weiner, Marcel Broodthaers)

### **Week 9: Land Art, Neo-Pop, Neo-Conceptual Art**

Key Artists: Land Art (Robert Smithson, Walter De Maria, James Turrell); Neo-Pop (Jeff Koons, Takashi Murakami); Neo-Conceptual Art (Sherrie Levine, YBA (Damien Hirst, Tracey Emin, Rachel Whiteread))

### **Week 10: Field Trip**

We will have a field trip to an artist's studio and an art institution.

### **Week 11: Post 1990's: Art Institutions**

Documenta

Biennials (Venice, Istanbul, Sao Paulo, Taipei, Sharjah)

Museums (MoMA, Guggenheim, Tate Modern, Istanbul Modern, Pera Museum, SSM, Elgiz Museum)

Exhibition Spaces (Salt, Arter, Tensta Konsthall, Whitechapel Gallery)

Galleries (Nev, Pi Artworks, Mixer, Dirimart, David Zwirner)

Fairs (Frieze, Art Basel, Contemporary Istanbul, Art International)

Auction Houses (Christie's, Sotheby's)

Art Schools (Goldsmiths, Bard, Salzburg Summer Academy, Ashkal Alwan, IKS(new))

Artist Initiatives (Hafriyat, Apartment Project, MARS, Poşe)

Artist Residencies (Schloss-Solitude, ISCP, Delfina, Transartists, ResArtis)

Publications (ArtReview, ArtForum, IAN, e-flux, Cabinet)

Financial Support (SAHA)

### **Week 12: Post 1990s: Predominant Topics**

Institutional Critique (Hans Haacke, Hito Steyerl, Andrea Fraser)

Identity Politics (Fred Wilson, Shirin Neshat, Şener Özmen, Adrian Piper)  
Experience (James Turrell, Tino Sehgal, Olafur Eliasson, Pipilotti Rist, Anish Kapoor)  
Artistic Research (Minerva Cuevas, Forensic Architecture, Natascha Sadr Haghghian)  
Required Reading: “In Defence of the Poor Image”, Hito Steyerl, e-flux journal #10.  
'*The Language of New Media*'; Lev Manovich; pg 3 - 8.

Recommended Reading:

Hans Haacke, Time as Matter Catalogue, Macba,  
[https://www.macba.cat/uploads/20090827/HansHaacke\\_Shapolskyetal\\_1971\\_ENG.pdf](https://www.macba.cat/uploads/20090827/HansHaacke_Shapolskyetal_1971_ENG.pdf)

**Week 13: New Media Art**

Required Reading: “The Digital Divide: Claire Bishop on Contemporary Art and New Media.”  
Artforum (September 2012)

Recommended Reading:

'*A Theory of Media*'; Alexander R. Galloway;

<http://cultureandcommunication.org/galloway/a-theory-of-media#more-1369>

Key Artists: Rhizome.org, Medienkunstnetz.de; Burak Arıkan, Ali Taptık, Vuk Cosic, Petra Cortright, Aram Bartholl, Julien Oliver, Amalia Ulman, Stelarc, Ed Atkins