

Course Number

ART_HIST 260

Course Title

Introduction to Contemporary Art: Survey of Art Since 1960

Quarter/Year

Spring 2022

Day/Time

MW 11a-12:20p

Instructor

Lane Relyea

Distro Fulfillment

Post-1800 CE



Course Description

This slide-lecture course is designed to give both art majors and non-majors an introduction to the myriad forms and concerns of art over the last half century. We will begin in the present, looking first at the impact of globalization on the conditions underlying art's production, exhibition and reception. We will then return to the late 1950s and the center of the international art world at the time, New York, and examine how the traditions of painting and sculpture, and with them the idea of a modernist canon, were increasingly challenged by a range of practices (dispersed geographically and

otherwise) that have been loosely labeled as neo-dada, pop, minimalism and conceptual art. The second half of the course will focus on the issues raised by the return to representation in painting, by photography and other technologies of reproduction, and by new genres like video art and installation. Even more recent paradigms will be examined, such as the superceding of images by information, and of art exhibition by communication and media platforming. We will consider some of the different ways that artists handle information and new media and technology, for example how they have appropriated relatively new forms like networks and databases. Along with the social and technological changes associated with globalization and the artistic responses to such changes, we will track shifts in art's relationship to audiences and culture at large, and will question the relevance today of distinctions between high and low, margin and mainstream. This will finally equip us to update our notions of modernism and Postmodernism in the visual arts, and re-evaluate the usefulness of the avant-garde as a model and re-examine its long-held desire to merge art and life.

Morris Louis, Alpha Alpha, 1960

Required Textbooks

Reading packet available at Quartet Copies, 825 Clark St.

Assessments

Attendance, Class Participation, Discussion Section, Exams, Final Exams, Mid-Term, Readings