

ART 6933 - Discourses of the art object: from Essentialism to Art and Objecthood.

Spring 2020
3 credits

Instructor: Sergio Vega <veryvega@ufl.edu>
Hours: Wednesday, periods 11 to E2 (6:15 to 9:10 PM)
Classroom FAC B004
Office Hours: Wednesday 3 to 4 PM (by appointment)
Office FAD 229 / phone 352-281-7283

Course Goals and Objectives

The objective is for students to develop the standards of research, conceptualization and production expected from professional artists. In order to achieve this goal, it is crucial that students strive for developing an effective visual and critical vocabulary to substantiate their practice. Students will be required to produce a new body of work and to talk and write about it in relation to art history and contemporary art theories. Emphasis will be on the integration of studio practice and critical thought. It is expected that the theoretical investigations conducted in the context of the class will be employed by students to further develop their own artistic approach.

Methods of the Course

This course will consist on lectures, readings, class discussions of the readings, the assignment of written reports, critiques of student work and individual consultations. In our weekly class critique sessions students will have the opportunity to receive feedback from classmates and instructors. Students will show their work in progress throughout the semester in this forum. For the final presentation it is expected that the work will be displayed in a finished condition as if it were installed in an exhibition open to the public. The strategies and forms of presentation are crucial for the appropriate reception of the projects. Students should set up studio visits with the instructor individually. Everyone needs to meet with the instructor of record for this course at least once this semester.

Topical Outline

This seminar studies theoretical approaches to sculpture making, installation art and related art forms, in order to disclose how diverse critical discourses are employed to inform and contextualize the understanding, reception and distribution of artworks.

In the past forty years, the field of sculpture has expanded to incorporate the methods and theories of an array of disciplines. Happenings, performance art, land art, site specificity, institutional critique, architecture, digital media, video art, photography, installation art, are just some of the fields into which sculpture has developed. Strategies of production, distribution, display, reception, interactivity and sociability are now primary concerns of sculpture practice.

This course will focus on the research of the critical discourses that influenced the practice of sculpture by creating some of the foundations on which of Contemporary art practice rests today. Do we recognize an object as a work of art because of its aura of originality? Is this aura an essential uniqueness that distinguishes it from other objects? Are the qualities that we value in an art object intrinsic or relational? What is the role of the exhibition space in constructing the meaning of an object as an art object? Is art determined by the context in which it is presented?

Students will be required to research key theoretical arguments and to interpret how these have informed the artistic strategies employed by contemporary artists. The results of this research would be introduced to the class through weekly presentations.

Topics covered are:

- 1) Clive Bell: Essentialism and the Institutional definition of Art
- 2) Clement Greenberg: Avant Garde and Kitsch
- 3) Walter Benjamin: The work of art in the age of mechanical reproduction

4) Adorno and Horkheimer: The Culture Industry, enlightenment as mass deception

5) Michael Fried: Art and Objecthood

Grading Criteria

A) *Outstanding*: thoughtful and intelligent ideas presented in a clear, organized, and engaging manner, the final product has fine art exhibition quality, among the very best. B) *Above average - good*: the ideas are interesting and successfully presented; shows potential, but not necessarily distinctive; roughly equal in quality to the majority of work completed by other students, the final results can be improved. C) *Average - mediocre*: achieves the minimum requirements, but not particularly clear, successful or ambitious. Quality of the work is below that of most other projects submitted. D) *Unsatisfactory*: does not satisfy the minimum; generally unsatisfactory in terms of quality and clarity. F) *Failed*: The student did not complete a project.

Final grade is obtained by evaluations added in percentage: Artwork 60% Attendance and participation 20% Assigned presentations and critical papers 20%

Attendance policy

Classes like this are designed to give students the maximum personal attention, however they only succeed when students understand that each person is important to the community. Each student's unique voice is needed in discussions and critiques. Attending class is a vital part of learning the skills and concepts students need to enhance their expressive potential and artistic abilities.

Policy regarding make-up of late work, and missed critiques

It is the student's responsibility to make up missed class sessions or late work. Group critiques and class discussions cannot be repeated. Critique due dates demand the student's attendance.

Counseling

University Counseling Services/ Counseling Center 301 Peabody Hall P.O. Box 114100, University of Florida Gainesville, FL 32611-4100

Phone: 352-392-1575 Web: www.counsel.ufl.edu If you are experiencing problems or difficulties with the academic requirements of this course you may also contact the Departmental Advisor in Fine Arts: +1 (352) 392-0207. Further, the Dean of Students Office can assist you with a range of support services. <http://www.dso.ufl.edu/supportservices/>

Students with Disabilities

Students with disabilities who experience learning barriers and would like to request academic accommodations should connect with the disability Resource Center by visiting <https://disability.ufl.edu/students/get-started/>. It is important for students to share their accommodation letter with their instructor and discuss their access needs, as early as possible in the semester.

Academic Honesty

The university's policies regarding academic honesty, the honor code, and student conduct related to the honor code will be strictly enforced. Full information regarding these policies is available at the following links: - Academic Honesty:

<http://www.registrar.ufl.edu/catalog/policies/students.html#honesty>

- Honor Code: <http://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/honorcodes/honorcode.php> - Student Conduct:

<http://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/honorcodes/conductcode.php>

Health and Safety

The link below includes information and policies regarding health and safety in the School of Art and Art History at UF.

<http://www.arts.ufl.edu/art/healthandsafety>