

TAI-E4014 - Contemporary Art
and Its Social Context, 5cr

20.09.2018-29.11.2018

Thursday 1pm to 5pm

Aalto ARTS

TAI-E4014 - Contemporary Art and Its Social Context

20.9.2018

- Introductions: course content, assignments & project work, assessment... participants

BREAK

- Contemporary art as a paradigm
- Homework for the next session

TAI-E4014 - Contemporary Art and Its Social Context

- Study forms: lectures & discussions, readings & student presentations, exhibitions visits & assignments; based on and using *visual material (images, videos), literature, artworks, exhibitions and archives*.
- Study project. You will *think up, design and realise a research / art / art education project* in relation / as a response to the partner institution. The outcome can take the form of *an event, publication, website, installation, poster...* of your choice. Theme: art institution – as producer of contemporary art, as a public space, as a meeting place... To be discussed in more detail!

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Learning outcomes

At the end of the course the student...

Knowledge

- will have a good understanding of key concepts of site- and time-specific and participatory art
- will know some of the central texts and theories relating to these art forms
- and be aware of a wide range of artistic practices and artists working in the field; *and of the institutional framework of contemporary art*

Skills and competences

- will be able to recognize the specific features of contemporary art and to articulate their views about it

- will be able to critically analyze and interpret (spatial, temporal, participatory) artworks
- will be able to analyze and discuss institutional and global aspects of art production
- will be able to recognize and make statements about the roles and relationships between various actors in contemporary art
- will be able to critically reflect upon the concepts of public sphere and democratic participation in the art context
- and will be able to apply this knowledge and theoretical awareness in a practical context and create a product to be presented for the audience

Expectations

- I wish this course will give me new ideas and approaches to critically evaluate my artistic and pedagogical work now and future. On the field of contemporary art I'm specially interested in installation art made by communities and interdiscipline collectives.
- I hope that we will have a great conversation and learning process together and we will become important networks for each others.
- I'm interest in the discussion about 'Art worker', the relation between Art and Work/Labor and 'practice-based' art work in contemporary art. Also I would like to figure out the role of art as an educational method.
- I have been trying to combine the contextual meaning of contemporary art with the reflection of social issues in the interaction and creative reflection of the curriculum. I hope to get more new ideas in this course, thank you!
- I don't have a pronounced opinion about contemporary art. Yes some art pieces inspire me more than others and some I like and others I think nothing of but I haven't really figured out why exactly that is.
- My interests regarding to contemporary art are pretty wide - I would like to know as much as I can! I am interested in various aspects of art, of it's creation processes and final work; in background, meaning and message. And, of course, I would be happy to see more visual examples and to get insight what is happening now.
- I am interested in how to assess artworks and reflect on them and I would like to get an overview of contemporary art to be able to reference art streams, assess my own work and find inspiration from others.
- I'm really interested in how art can have an impact on society and vice versa. I hope to get a good overview and framework of contemporary art and to be able to reference different art streams in my own work.

Expectations

- I am quite interested in knowing how this kind of commercial art exhibitions have drawn the general public to pay a visit. (Many of these visitors don't visit museums in their leisure time regularly.) I am also interested in knowing who and how to determine some contemporary artwork as "good" or "bad"; how art critics analyze contemporary works of art; as well as the relations among contemporary artists, social media, galleries, auction houses and museums. I wish to learn how to appreciate and analyze contemporary art from different perspectives too, eg aesthetically, culturally, socially, economically...
- I hope this course is going to make contemporary art easier to understand. I hope we will get to discuss and ask not always the wisest questions regarding contemporary art. I am also interesting in not only reading theories, but also discussing about concrete art works, what feelings and questions they arouse and so on. I am also interested in relationship between art and non-art, high and low.
- I'm looking forward for this class to analyse the cross-curriculum aspect of contemporary art. My specifics interests are wide but mostly around narratives processes and social/cultural issues.
- I am so looking forward to this class and diving into what contemporary art is today. My specific interests have been focused in craft and process, and I am looking forward to discussing the ways these areas intersect and interact with contemporary art!

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- Assessment (from oodi) *Reading reflections (20%), Discussion (20%), Class room presentations (20%), and final project (40%). >> participation, homework, project work. Scale 0–5.*
- Workload: $40h + 95h = 135h$
 - *Contact sessions 10 x 4h = 40h*
 - *Reading assignment 6 x 40-50p = 7 x 3h +*
 - *Preparation for contact sessions and visits $\approx 25h$*
 - *Project proposals, group work*
 - *Project preparation, group work $\approx 50h$*
 - *Revising and "time to think"*

Contemporary art as a paradigm

- What is a paradigm?
 - Thomas Kuhn, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* (1962)

Contemporary art as a paradigm

[ALL ART HAS BEEN
CONTEMPORARY®]

MORE THAN MEETS THE EYE

Contemporary art as a paradigm

- Contemporary art as...
 - Chronological: historical period, art of today
 - Artistic: after the modern(ism)
 - Stylistic: visual characteristics
 - Philosophical: contemporaneity
- ...a paradigm

Evidence of paradigm change

- Art can be made of any material and take any form imaginable.
- Artwork is not (necessarily) an object. *Dematerialisation.*
- Art as an idea, not aesthetics. *Conceptualisation.*
- Variety of methods and techniques, multisensory. *Hybridisation.*
- From representation to presence. *Contextualisation.*
- Process more or as important as the outcome; artwork as event. Ephemeralisation. *Documentation.*
- The viewer as part of the work. *Participation.*

...Evidence of paradigm change

- Re-use / re-interpretation of older artworks
- Collecting and using archives, data, research in art
- Decline of painting
- Art as activism as art
- Role of the artist. “Allographisation”.
- Importance of discourse and mediations
- Role of curators & other mediators
- Globalisation
- Art market

Consequences of paradigm change:

- You cannot discern what art is, based on what it looks like
- Consequences to production, presentation, viewing, buying, research...



What an artist does



Richard Serra, Verb list

What an artist does



- Miwon Kwon: “to negotiate, to coordinate, to compromise, to research, to promote, to organize, to interview...”
- Rudolf Frieling: “to generate, to change, to contribute, to enact, to dialogue, to translate, to appropriate, to tag...”

Homework for 27.9.

- Three groups
 1. Site-specific
 2. Time-specific (time-based, durational)
 3. Socially specific (participatory, relational)
- Read the texts. Note down the main idea(s). Choose one artwork to illustrate and explain the text. Prepare to present (main ideas, your choice of work, questions you may have...).

Readings

- 1. Site-specific art

- * Miwon Kwon, 2004, *One place after another*, chapters 1 & 2 pp. 11–55.

- * Claire Bishop, 2005, *Installation art: a critical history*, 'Introduction', pp. 6–13.

- 2. Time-specific art

- * Claire Doherty ed., 2004, *From studio to Situation*, 'The new situationists' pp. 7-13.

- * Lara Shalson, 2012, *On Duration and Multiplicity*, *Performance Research*, 17:5, 98-106.

- 3. Socially specific / relational art

- * Miwon Kwon, 2004, *One place after another*, chapter 4 pp. 100–137.

- * Nicolas Bourriaud, 2002, *Relational Aesthetics*, pp. 11-17, 41-48.

...Homework

Finding artworks:

Check e.g. projects by

- IHME
<http://www.ihmefestival.fi/en/history/>
- Checkpoint Helsinki
www.checkpointhelsinki.org/en/
- Artangel <https://www.artangel.org.uk/>
- One day sculpture
<http://www.onedaysculpture.org.nz/index.php>

