

Title: Contemporary Art and its Politics: Visuality, Activism and the Social Turn

Course(s): Visual Culture, Master's Program, 1st/ 2nd year

Short abstract of the discipline

This course aims to introduce students in recent theories, debates and practices around contemporary art, curating cultures and their respective institutional frameworks. It 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 patriarchal and Eurocentric ideologies and canons. The course will approach questions such as: Is the social role of art given or historically conditioned? How have expanded ideas of the 'visual' informed contemporary art's international focus? How do art institutions intervene in current social and economic landscapes? What are the specificities of artistic and creative labour? The students of this course are expected to develop a critical undertaking of current debates around art, visual culture and curating as well as draw significant insights on cultural policy and the design of artistic activities and events.

Criteria of assessment and form of control

The criteria of assessment include participation in classroom, one oral presentation for each student (around 20 minutes) as well as the writing of an essay of 2.500 words.

Selected Readings

Hal Foster. 1998. Vision and Visuality

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

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

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

Bryson, Norman. 1983. Vision and Painting: The Logic of the Gaze

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

Foster, Hal. 1995. The Artist as Ethnographer?

O'Neill, Paul. 2012. The Culture of Curating and the Curating of Culture (s)