

## **Contemporary Art and Post Media**

EMS-520H-01

Location: 3SR3

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Some have argued that the rise of social media, ubiquitous computing and smartphones has resulted in an increasingly mobile, networked world and a new phase for contemporary art, particularly within the past ten years. Many new terms have been developed by art historians, curators, critics, and artists from the early 2000's until now to explain this shift within contemporary art – including concepts such as post medium, formatting, dispersion, post media aesthetics, post media, radican art, meme art, and circulationism. This course will review these discussions alongside an overview of the history of internet art, which has nurtured many of these conversations. How does social media affect the reception of contemporary art? How can new technologies generate platforms for the presentation of contemporary art? How can or should art criticism evolve to reflect these changes? In order to tackle these and many other important questions, this class will review writings by Sarah Cook, David Joselit, Nicolas Bourriaud, Domenico Quaranta, Lev Manovich, Boris Groys, Rosalind Krauss, Hito Steyerl, Ed Halter, Seth Price, and more. Assignments will prepare students for the types of writing necessary for professional museum work, such as press releases, extended wall labels, brochure essays, etc.

### Assignments/Grade Breakdown:

Participation in class discussion and attendance (35%)

Assignment 1 Press Release (15%)

Assignment 2 Extended Wall Label (10%)

Assignment 3 Exhibition Proposal (20%)

Assignment 4 Exhibition Brochure Essay (20%)

*Students may be asked to prepare in-class preparations during some sessions.*

### Class policies:

Finish readings before class and be prepared to discuss the texts

More than 2 unexcused absences and your grade will drop by a full grade

No late writing assignments will be accepted.

## Week 1 (January 21) Introduction

## Week 2 (January 28) Defining New Media

- Walter Benjamin, "The Work of Art in the Age of Its Technological Reproducibility," *The Work of Art in the Age of its Technological Reproducibility* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2008), pp. 19-55.
- Lev Manovich, "What is New Media?," *The Language of New Media* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2001), pp. 19-61.
- Mark B. N. Hansen, "New Media," *Critical Terms for Media Studies*, Mark B. N. Hansen and W. J. T. Mitchell, eds. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2010)
- Mark Tribe, "Introduction" in *New Media Art* (Los Angeles: Taschen, 2006)
- Review Jasia Reichardt *Cybernetic Serendipity: the computer and the arts* (New York: Praeger, 1969), archival material related to the exhibition available here: <http://cyberneticserendipity.net/>

## Week 3 (February 4) Net Art 1.0: DIY, Listservs in the 1990s, The Thing, Rhizome

- "Introduction," "Reverse Engineering Modernism with the Last Avant-Garde" and "Rendezvous: The Discovery of Pure Sociality in Early Net Art" From *Net Pioneers 1.0: Contextualizing Early Net-Based Art*
- Rachel Greene, "Early Internet Art" in *Internet Art* (London: Thames & Hudson, 2004)
- Peter Weibel, "The Project" in *net\_condition: art and global media* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1999)
- Review *net\_condition: art and globale media* website: <http://on1.zkm.de/netcondition/>

## Week 4 (February 11) Exhibiting and Curating Internet Art

- Joasia Krysa "Introduction" in *Curating Immateriality: The Work of the Curator in the Age of Network Systems* (Brooklyn: Autonomedia, 2006)
- "Introduction" and "Conclusions: Histories, Vocabularies, Modes" from Beryl Graham and Sarah Cook, *Rethinking Curating: Art After New Media* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2010)

- Christiane Paul, "Challenges for a Ubiquitous Museum: From the White Cube to the Black Box and Beyond" in *New Media in the White Cube and Beyond* (Berkeley: UC Press, 2008), pp. 53-75.
- Domenico Quaranta, "Lost in Translation. Or, Bringing Net Art to Another Place? Pardon, Context" in *In Your Computer* Brescia: Link Editions, 2010 pg. 70-79

Week 5 (February 18) Field Trip to Alter Space to see "An Increasingly Desperate Man"

- Introduction by Kevin Krueger, Director of Alter Space  
Meet at Alter Space at 4:30pm  
Address: 1158 Howard St, San Francisco, CA 94103

**Assignment 1 Due:** Write a press release for *Cybernetic Serendipity*, *net\_condition: art and global media* or an exhibition of your choice (400-600 words)

Week 6 (February 25) Internet Art 2.0? Social Media and Internet-based Art Production

- Selections from Lauren Cornell and Ed Halter, *Mass Effect: Art and the Internet in the Twenty-First Century*  
Lauren Cornell and Ed Halter "Hard Reboot: An Introduction to *Mass Effect*"  
Seth Price "Dispersion"  
"Net Aesthetics 2.0 Conversation, New York City, 2006: Part 1 of 3"  
"Net Aesthetics 2.0 Conversation, New York City, 2008: Part 2 of 3"  
"Post-Net Aesthetics Conversation, London, 2013: Part 3 of 3"

**Assignment 2 Due:** Write an extended wall label for one work of your choice in "An Increasingly Desperate Man" (Maximum 300 words)

Week 7 (March 3) Post Media and Radicant Aesthetics

- Lev Manovich, "Post Media Aesthetics" *sd* (2000-), 5.
- Nicolas Bourriaud "Radicant Aesthetics" in *The Radicant* (New York: Lukas & Sternberg, 2009) pp. 79-141

Week 8 (March 10) The Digital Image

- Boris Groys, "From the Image to the Image File – and Back: Art in the Age of Digitalization" in *Art Power* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2008), pp 83-91
- Hito Steyerl, "In Defense of the Poor Image" in *e-flux journal* issue 9, November 2009  
<http://www.e-flux.com/journal/view/94>

- Michael Sanchez, "2011: Art and Transmission" in *Artforum*, vol. 51, number 10, (Summer 2013): 295-301

March 14-18 Spring Break

Week 9 (March 24) The Post Internet Art Debate

- Artie Vierkant "The Image Object Post Internet" from *Jstchillin.org* (2010)
- Lauren Cornell, et al. "Beginnings and Ends" in *Frieze* Issue 159 (November-December 2013) <http://www.frieze.com/issue/article/beginnings-ends/>
- Michael Connor "Post Internet: What It Is and What It Was" and Jennifer Chan "Notes on Post Internet" in *You Are Here: Art After the Internet* (London: Cornerhouse Publications, 2013)
- Brian Droitcour, "The Perils of Post-Internet Art" in *Art in America* November 2014 <http://www.artinamericamagazine.com/news-features/magazine/the-perils-of-post-internet-art/>

Week 10 (March 31) Digital Publishing and Institutions

- Orit Gat, "Global Audiences, Zero Visitors: How to Measure the Success of Museums' Online Publishing" in *Rhizome* March 12, 2015 <http://rhizome.org/editorial/2015/mar/12/global-audiences-zero-visitors/>
- Sarah Hromack, "The Museum Interface" in *Art in America* October 2014 <http://www.artinamericamagazine.com/news-features/magazine/the-museum-interface/>
- Sarah Hromack, "It's Complicated: the Institution as Publisher" in *Superscript Reader* August 2015 <http://www.walkerart.org/magazine/2015/its-complicated-institution-publisher>

Guest Speaker: Sarah Hromack, Independent Consultant and Critic

**Assignment 3 Due:** Exhibition Proposal (600 words max)

Week 11 (April 7) The Post-Medium Condition

- Rosalind Krauss, *A Voyage on the North Sea: Art in the Age of the Post-Medium Condition* (London: Thames & Hudson, 2000), pp. 5-56.

Week 12 (April 14) After Art

- David Joselit, *After Art* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2013)
- David Joselit “What to Do with Pictures” *October*, no. 138 (Fall 2011)

Week 13 (April 21) Always On: Social Media, Institutions and the Present

- Hal Foster “In Praise of Actuality” in *Bad New Days: Art, Criticism and Emergency* (London: Verso, 2015)
- Boris Groys “Entering the Flow: Museum between Archive and Gesamtkunstwerk” *e-flux journal* #50 December 2013
- Nato Thompson “Contractions of Time: On Social Practice from a Temporal Perspective” *e-flux journal* #10, November 2010

Week 14 (April 28) The Future of Representation

- David Joselit, “Material Witness: Visual Evidence and the Case of Eric Garner” in *Artforum* (February 2015)
- Hito Steyerl, “Too Much World: Is the Internet Dead?” in *e-flux journal*, number 49 (November 2013)
- Ben Davis, “After Ferguson: A New Protest Culture’s Challenge to Art” in *artnet* December 16, 2014  
<https://news.artnet.com/art-world/after-ferguson-a-new-protest-cultures-challenge-to-art-194601>

Week 16 (May 5) Conclusion

**Assignment 4 Due:** Exhibition brochure essay (1000 words)