

SCHOOL OF FINE ART AND MUSIC
Winter Semester 2014
ARTH*3060-01
PUBLIC ART



INSTRUCTOR: Dr Susan Douglas
TIME: Monday. 7:00-9:50pm
LOCATION: MacKinnon, Rm. 114
OFFICE: Johnston Hall, Rm. 111
PHONE: Ext. 53024
EMAIL: sdouglas@uoguelph.ca
OFFICE HOURS: Tuesday 3:00-4:00 pm or by appointment

CALENDAR DESCRIPTION:

This course investigates what constitutes the "public" and the "private" domain in the arenas of art and visual culture. Provocative iconography, matters of race, nationality, sexuality, language, and identity in artistic practice, issues of censorship, controversial shows and exhibitions, the ethics of propriety and impropriety will be considered. Artists such as Linda Montano, Andres Serrano, Keith Haring, Annie Sprinkle, Robert Mapplethorpe and others will be discussed.

Prerequisite(s): 10.00 credits including 2.00 credits in Art History

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

We explore a wide range of artworks and projects specifically devised to be sited or staged in public space, from artworks that take the politics of representation as a platform to monuments inspired by the theme of physical space. At the center of this course is an examination of art as part of a cultural-economic system with its own rules of inclusion and inclusion, regulations and orders. We look at art as part of the 'attention economy' and Bourdieu's notion of a 'field' as a social space and a network where the value of art accrues. We investigate the many dimensions of the artworld, various artworld institutions (festivals, international shows, museums, funded art projects, cultural bureaucracies, galleries, foundations) and what these contribute to art and art talk. A prevailing direction in art is to discuss public space as an important catalyst of political events in the urban centers, a discourse arguably informing the globalization and transnational exchange from in the second part of the twentieth century. From the different frames for public art, we will turn our attention to contested plurality of public art. Using case studies between 1950s to the present we analyze various interests that gather and intersect where public space and the art scene are involved.

COURSE OUTCOMES:

- Recognize artworks and projects designed specifically to be sited or staged in public spaces.
- Understand the ideas, designs and processes behind some of the most famous works, and the pitfalls, as well as the politics, of making performances, media works, sculptures and landscape installations around the globe.
- Prepare for a career in the artworld by reporting on art world activities and researching examples of public art originating from all over the globe.
- Analyse the relationship between the artscene, artworks and the institutional world in a community-building digital project.

In general, by the end of this course, students will have developed understanding of public art as practice. This course raises issues about the value of art and the value of thinking about contemporary art as part of a social, cultural and economic system. Through readings, discussions and assignments, students will acquire critical thinking and writing skills. These skills will be developed and demonstrated by discussing the form, content and context of images and contemporary works of art, and by analysing the role of institutions and the marketplace on the field of contemporary art. The course raises issues about the value of thinking in terms of public interpretation when it comes to artistic practices. Students gain valuable knowledge about the conceptual differences in current public art.

REQUIRED TEXT:

Course readings will be available on-line or through the course instructor.

METHOD OF EVALUATION

ASSESSMENT	Weight	Due Date
Discussions/Journal.....	20%	Weekly
2 Reports	20%	Weeks 4 and 8
2 Presentations	20%	Weeks 4 and 8
Final paper outline.....	10%	Week 10
Final paper	30%	Week 12

A late penalty will be applied to late assignments. See details in Courselink.

FORMAT AND READINGS:

This course is devised as a lecture. As a result, the assigned readings have been chosen to introduce students to some of the leading artist, terms, and significant contributions to the development of contemporary art and culture. All students are expected to have read and prepared notes on the assigned chapters before the lectures.

The learning objectives for this course include being able to integrate visual literacy, global understanding, and a sense of historical development with visual and material culture from a multidisciplinary and theoretical perspective. Reaching these objectives rests with the students in the class and their ability to demonstrate initiative and

responsibility. The instructor will assist and “coach” throughout the process, but the main thrust of the exercise remains with the students. There is a significant amount of reading to take in throughout the semester. The assignments are devised to encourage critical and creative thinking. Students are expected to contribute to the focus of the course in terms of analysis, discussions, and summaries of the readings delivered orally or in writing.

OFFICE HOURS:

Office hours are established to allow students to ask questions, initiate private discussions regarding the content of the course, or art history in general.

EMAIL POLICY:

I will respond to emails within 48 hours except Saturdays and Sundays and reserve the right to ignore your email if I consider the issue redundant. Please inquire only about the issues that require immediate attention and before you email your professor take a look at the syllabus, the materials posted on Courselink and search on-line to try to find the answers on your own.

VIDEO/AUDIO RECORDING POLICY:

Any form of in-class video or audio recording or electronic capturing using cell phones, i-phones, recording to laptop or tape players is strictly prohibited without the instructor’s consent and permission. The use of laptops and other similar writing devices in the seminar room and for presentations is allowed in certain circumstances. Please turn your cell phone off during class.