

COURSE DETAIL

THEORY IN CONTEMPORARY ART SINCE THE 1950S

Country

Italy

Host Institution

University of Bologna

Program(s)

University of Bologna

UCEAP Course Level

Upper Division

UCEAP Subject Area(s)

Art History

UCEAP Course Number

166

UCEAP Course Suffix**UCEAP Official Title**

THEORY IN CONTEMPORARY ART SINCE THE 1950S

UCEAP Transcript Title

THRY CONTEMP ART

UCEAP Quarter Units

6.00

UCEAP Semester Units

4.00

Course Description

This course is part of the Laurea Magistrale degree program and is intended for advanced level students. Enrollment is by permission of the instructor. Students learn about the theories at the core of the most relevant contemporary art practices of the late XX and early XXI centuries, maturing their skills to analyze and contextualize the main artistic currents since the 1950s. Students learn to critically evaluate the works of art and carry out independent research. In particular, they acquire the tools to interpret the peculiarities of today's art in relation with media and politics.

The course explores fundamental moments in the history of contemporary art from the 1950s to the present, focusing on the main methodological, thematic, and theoretical issues that have emerged in the visual arts. It opens with a discussion on various genres of painting of the post-war period, from Abstract Expressionism to Art Brut, in reference to the theories of "modernist painting" elaborated by Clement Greenberg. The second lecture discusses tactics such as *détournement*, *assemblage* and *replica*, variously developed within artistic movements that emerged in the 1960s in response to consumerist culture, from Situationism to Pop Art. Then, other artistic movements and practices of the 1960s are explored, this time based on the idea of art as a "process", i.e. Minimalism and conceptual art in the third lecture, and some hybrid practices developed in response to or relationship with technology, i.e. video, cybernetics and intermedia, in the fourth lecture. The fifth and sixth lecture are dedicated to performative practices developed in reaction to some institutions, now those of art and now those of society, from Fluxus to feminist art. The next two lectures, seven and eight, focus on crucial issues of postmodernist art such as the appropriationist approach of the Pictures Generation and pastiche. While the ninth lecture focuses on anti-academic art practices, born in so-called underground or subcultural environments, from the tenth lecture onwards examine currents that have emerged since the 1990s in relation to the impact of globalization, the liberalist logic of media and economy, and the profusion of digital technologies and the Internet. These include: Post Human, Abject Art, YBAs, Relational Aesthetics, installation art, socially engaged art, post-Internet art and various contemporary forms of painting,

photography and video installation.

Language(s) of Instruction

English

Host Institution Course Number

B5354

Host Institution Course Title

THEORY IN CONTEMPORARY ART SINCE THE 1950S (1) (LM)

Host Institution Course Details

<https://www.unibo.it/en/study/course-units-transferable-skills-moocs/course-uni...>

Host Institution Campus

BOLOGNA

Host Institution Faculty**Host Institution Degree**

LM in VISUAL ARTS

Host Institution Department

Arts

Course Last Reviewed

2025-2026

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