
SENIOR SEMINAR: HAPPENINGS AND PERFORMANCE ART in Spring 2021 (AH4090)

Course Code	AH4090	Professor(s)	Herve Vanel
Prerequisites	None	Office Number	C-504
Class Schedule	M: 10:35-11:55 in C-101 R: 15:20-16:40 in C-101	Office Hours	TBD
Credits	4	Email	hvanel@aup.edu
Semester	Spring 2021	Office Tel. Ext.	633

Course Description

Topic

Initiated in the early 20th century among Futurist and Dadaist circles, Happenings and Performances were interdisciplinary forms of expression that became accepted, and even conventional artistic media of the 1960s. From Yoko Ono to Marina Abramovic, Bruce Nauman or Vanessa Beecroft, numerous artists' works from the past 60 years have been interpreted in relation to the codes of performances and happenings. This class examines the emergence, the evolution, and the critical interpretations of these new artistic languages in light of post-World War II society. The role played by seminal artists — Alan Kaprow, John Cage, Claes Oldenburg, among others — will be studied along with specific questions: Is it possible to fully involve viewers in a process of creation? Can our Western culture deal with ephemeral art forms?

Thesis / Argument

The emergence (or re-emergence) of performances and happenings in the late 1950s and 1960s remains — to a great extent — in the margins of the canonical history of post-World War II artistic developments.

Such practices did not conform to the tradition of object-making, rejected contemplative mode of apprehending art, and resisted definitions in terms of conventional "medium."

While the class will mostly follow a chronological approach, it does not aim at writing a straightforward history of a new artistic genre. The goal is rather, through a series of "snapshots" or "case studies" to discuss the utopian goal that seems to be underlying numerous performances and happenings.

The questioning of traditional authorship and spectatorship, the refusal to conform to cultural

(and social) norms and the sheer difficulty to relate to events that were, essentially, ephemeral will constitute the core of a debate that examine the role and function of art in our contemporary society.

The class aims at stimulating critical thinking; meaningful discussions and debates are encouraged.

Acquisition of research and writing skills in an academic framework

Production of a (potentially) publishable research-based essay.

Requirements

1. Thursday February 4 One paragraph (c. 200 words): Formulation of a topic (around an artist, a “movement,” a type of performance, a genre of happening). The paragraph should be accompanied by two bibliographical references used to formulate your topic.

2. Thursday March 4 Research bibliography: a selection of ten [10] sources: each one briefly commented (summary of the content; main argument; usefulness in relation to the topic). The sources should comprise: two [2] books minimum and eight [8] articles. The bibliography should demonstrate a variety of research strategy: JSTOR; Project MUSE; Sage Journals; Interlibrary Loans, if not, considering the sanitary situation, library material. Digital copies of books will be accepted as long as a proof that a full copy of the book has been consulted (via library purchase or interlibrary loans): references to generalist websites, fragments of Google books or other non-academic sources will not be accepted.

3. Thursday March 25: A detailed plan (two pages) unfolding the articulation of your essay and the use of your sources; the document should present a refined version of your initial topic, modified in accordance to the research conducted.

4. Thursday April 22 Research Essay: c. 4000 words without footnotes (or 5000 words long essay including footnotes) equivalent to c. 30 000 characters including spaces]. Sections should be clearly articulated; strong introductory and concluding paragraphs should be clearly formulated. Your essay should rely on a clear and pertinent body of references detailed in a bibliography and referenced in footnotes:

Course Learning Outcomes

Students will become familiar with important artistic and cultural trends of the period
We will examine a range of primary sources, both visual and textual, and learn to understand the different ways in which these sources communicated through style, language, and structure. Close visual observation will inform written formal analysis
In addition, students will engage with secondary texts in art history in order to refine their critical

evaluation of such scholarship and gain an awareness of the methodologies of the field
Ultimately, as a senior capstone, this course aims to equip students with the skills necessary to formulate complex theses that address both formal artistic concerns and historical circumstances

Students will apply knowledge and skills acquired through both the core curriculum and their major requirements to a disciplinary or interdisciplinary, cumulative, or project-based experience to express their growth and the totality of their learning while at AUP (CCC LO1)

Students will engage in the self-assessment, reflection and analysis of this process that prepares them for future success and be able to articulate this to future educational and professional interlocutors (CCC LO2)

General Education

[PLEASE REMOVE THIS SECTION IF THE COURSE DOES NOT FULFILL ANY GLACC REQUIREMENT]

GLACC

The Global Liberal Arts Core Curriculum (GLACC) degree requirements include the following categories of courses:

- Integrative Inquiry (coded CCI)
- Experiential learning (coded CCX)
- Research, Interpretation, and Writing (coded CCE)
- Digital Literacy and Communication (coded CCD)
- Disciplinary Research Methods and Writing (coded CCR)
- Quantitative Reasoning (coded CCM)
- Experimental Reasoning Course with Lab (coded CCS)
- Expression Française (coded FR)
- AUP Capstone (coded CCC)

This course can be used to fulfill the [INDICATE THE REQUIREMENT(S) FULFILLED BY THE COURSE] requirement and as such has the following learning outcomes:

[INDICATE THE GENERAL EDUCATION LEARNING OUTCOMES]

Course Outline

Schedule

Week 1 – Introduction and Historical Ground

1. Monday January 18 [from 10:35 to 11:55 am]

2. Thursday January 21 [03:20 to 04:40 pm]

Readings

Allan Kaprow, "The Legacy of Jackson Pollock," (1958) and "Note on the Creation of a Total Art," (1958) reprinted in Allan Kaprow, *Essays on the Blurring of Art and Life*, Jeff Kelley (ed.) Berkeley, Los Angeles, London, University of California Press, 1993.

Michael Kirby, introduction to *Happenings*, New York, E. P. Dutton, 1965, large excerpts available in *Happenings and Other Acts*, ed. By Maryellen R. Sansford, London and New York, Routledge, 1995, 1-28.

Week 2 – Around the Beat Generation

3. Monday January 25 [from 10:35 to 11:55 am]

4. Thursday January 28 [03:20 to 04:40 pm] -Topic ideas (discussion)

Readings

Excerpts from *Beat generation : New-york, San Francisco*, Centre Pompidou, 2016, Paris

Week 3 – Gutai Unframed

5. Monday February 1 [from 10:35 to 11:55 am]

6. Thursday February 4 [03:20 to 04:40 pm] Due Date for Topic

Readings

Jiro Yoshihara, "The Gutai Manifesto," *Geijutsu Shincho*. (December 1956); reprinted in Bertozzi, Barbara, and Klaus Wolbert. *Gutai: Japanische Avantgarde, 1954–1965* (Darmstadt: Mathildenhöhe. 1991)

Week 4 – Research and Methods

X. Monday February 8 [No class]

7. Thursday February 11 [03:20 to 04:40 pm] Discussing Topics and Research

Week 5 –Kaprow: Making Happenings

8. Monday February 15 [from 10:35 to 11:55 am]

9. Thursday February 18 [03:20 to 04:40 pm]

Readings

Richard Kostelanetz, "Environmental Abundance," (1969) on John Cage's HPSCHD Composed between 1967 and 1969. Premiered in Champaign-Urbana, Il., May 16, 1969.

Allan Kaprow, "The Legacy of Jackson Pollock," (1958) and "Note on the Creation of a Total Art," (1958) reprinted in Allan Kaprow, *Essays on the Blurring of Art and Life*, Jeff Kelley (ed.) Berkeley, Los Angeles, London, University of California Press, 1993

Week 6 –Whitman and Oldenburg

10. Monday February 22 [from 10:35 to 11:55 am]

X. Thursday February 25 [No class]

Readings

Claes Oldenburg: *Store Days: Documents from The Store (1961) and Ray Gun Theater (1962)*, Something Else Press, 1967

Claes Oldenburg, "Egomessages about Pollock," in "Jackson Pollock: An Artists' Symposium, Part 2," *Art News*, vol. 66, no. 3 (May 1967),

Week 7 –Jean-Jacques Lebel and Actionists

11. Monday March 1 [from 10:35 to 11:55 am]

12. Thursday March 4 [03:20 to 04:40 pm] Research bibliography Due

Readings

Richard Shiff, "Art and Life: A Metaphoric Relationship," *Critical Inquiry*, Vol. 5, No.1, Special Issue on Metaphor (Autumn, 1978), 107-122.

Eric Michaud (trans. By Rosalind Krauss), "The Ends of Art According to Beuys," *October*, Vol. 45 (Summer, 1988), pp. 36-46 [Text in French]

Week 8 –Fluxus Nebula and Beuys

13. Monday March 8 [from 10:35 to 11:55 am]

14. Thursday March 11 [03:20 to 04:40 pm] – Reviewing bibliography

Readings

George Maciunas (1931-1978) 'Neo-Dada in Music, Theater, Poetry, Art' manifesto was written for the Fluxus concert, 'Apres John Cage', given in Wiesbaden, 9 June 1962. translated in Art in theory, 1900-2000: an anthology of changing ideas, Charles Harrison and Paul Wood ed., Oxford, UK ; Cambridge, Mass., USA: Blackwell, 2002.

Week 9 – Yoko Ono and the Feminist Dissidence

15. Monday March 15 [from 10:35 to 11:55 am]

16. Thursday March 18 [03:20 to 04:40 pm]

Readings

Yoko Ono "The Feminization of Society" and "What is The Relationship Between the World and the Artist?" (1971) in catalog Yoko Ono : Lumière de l'aube, Musée d'art contemporain de Lyon, Isabelle Bertolotti, Jon Hendricks, Thierry Raspail (eds.), Paris, Somogy, 2016.

Carolee Schneemann, excerpt from "The Notebooks" (1962-63), in More than Meat Joy: Complete Performance Works and Selected Writings, ed. Bruce McPherson (New Paltz, N.Y.: Documentext, 1979), 9-11.

Carolee Schneemann (b. 1939), Interior Scroll - The Cave (1975-1995), 1975-1995 video, 7:30 min, color, sound.

Week 10 – Chris Burden – Body Art

17. Monday March 22 [from 10:35 to 11:55 am]

18. Thursday March 25 [03:20 to 04:40 pm] Detailed plan due

Readings

Chris Burden, untitled statement printed in Jan Butterfield, "Chris Burden: Through the Night Softly," Arts 49, no. 7 (March 1975): 68-72.

Excerpts of Chris Burden (1946-2015) Documentation of Selected Works 1971-74 (1971-75) 34:38 min, color and b&w, sound

Robert Hughes, "The Decline and Fall of the Avant-Garde," Time, December 18, 1972, p.111-112.

Heidi Grundmann. excerpts from a dialogue with Marina Abramovic and Ulay (Vienna, 15 April

1978), in Marina Abramovic / Ulay, Ulay/ Marina Abramovic: Relation Works: 3 Performances (Innsbruck: Galerie Krinzinger, 1978), n.p.

Week 11- –Legacy and Posterity

19. Monday March 29 [from 10:35 to 11:55 am]

20. Thursday April 1st [03:20 to 04:40 pm] Reviewing Plan

Readings

Nicolas Bourriaud, Excerpts from *Esthétique relationnelle* (Relational Aesthetics), Paris: Les presses du réel, 1998, translated in 2002.

Janet Kraynak, "Rirkrit Tiravanija's Liability," *Documents* 13, Fall 1998, 26–40

Claire Bishop, "Antagonism and Relational Aesthetics," *October*, 110, Fall 2004, p. 51–79.

Week 12 Finalizing Your Essay

21. Monday April 5 [No Class]

22. Thursday April 8 [03:20 to 04:40 pm] – Finalizing your essay.

Week 13 Presentations

23. Monday April 12 [from 10:35 to 11:55 am] Two Oral Presentations

24. Thursday April

Week 14 – Presentations

25. Monday April 19 [from 10:35 to 11:55 am] Two Oral Presentations

26. Thursday April 22 [03:20 to 04:40 pm] Two Oral Presentations

Week 15 – Presentations

27. Monday April 26 [from 10:35 to 11:55 am] Two Oral Presentations

Indicative Bibliography

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Michael Kirby, *Happenings: an Illustrated Anthology*, New York, E. P. Dutton & Co., 1965.

Allan Kaprow, *Assemblage, Environments & Happenings*, New York, Harry N. Abrams, Inc., 1965

Udo Kultermann, *Art and Life*, New York, Washington, Praeger Publishers, 1971

RoseLee Golberg, *Performance: Live Art 1909 to the Present*, London, Thames and Hudson, 1979.

Gregory Battcock and Robert Nickas (eds.), *The Art of Performance: A Critical Anthology*, New York, E. P. Dutton, 1984.

Arnaud Labelle-Rojoux, *L'Acte pour l'Art*, Paris, Les Editeurs Evidant, 1988.

Janet Jenkins (ed.), *In The Spirit of Fluxus*, exhibition cat., Walker Art Center, Mineapolis, 1993

Richard Martel (ed.), *Art Action: 1958-1998*, Quebec, Inter/Editeur, 2001

Laurence Bertrand Dorléac, *L'Ordre sauvage: violence, dépense et sacré dans l'art des années 1950-1960*, Paris, Gallimard, Art et Artistes, 2004.

Claire Bishop (eds), *Participation*, London, Cambridge, Whitechapel, MIT Press, Documents on Contemporary Art, 2006

Textbooks

This course doesn't have any textbook.

Attendance Policy

Students studying at The American University of Paris are expected to attend ALL scheduled classes, and in case of absence, should contact their professors to explain the situation. It is the student's responsibility to be aware of any specific attendance policy that a faculty member might have set in the course syllabus. The French Department, for example, has its own

attendance policy, and students are responsible for compliance. Academic Affairs will excuse an absence for students' participation in study trips related to their courses.

Attendance at all exams is mandatory.

IN ALL CASES OF MISSED COURSE MEETINGS, THE RESPONSIBILITY FOR COMMUNICATION WITH THE PROFESSOR, AND FOR ARRANGING TO MAKE UP MISSED WORK, RESTS SOLELY WITH THE STUDENT.

Whether an absence is excused or not is ALWAYS up to the discretion of the professor or the department. Unexcused absences can result in a low or failing participation grade. In the case of excessive absences, it is up to the professor or the department to decide if the student will receive an "F" for the course. An instructor may recommend that a student withdraw, if absences have made it impossible to continue in the course at a satisfactory level.

Students must be mindful of this policy when making their travel arrangements, and especially during the Drop/Add and Exam Periods.

Grading Policy

Requirements

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- 2. Thursday March 4** Research bibliography: a selection of ten [10] sources: each one briefly commented (summary of the content; main argument; usefulness in relation to the topic). The sources should comprise: two [2] books minimum and eight [8] articles. The bibliography should demonstrate a variety of research strategy: JSTOR; Project MUSE; Sage Journals; Interlibrary Loans, if not, considering the sanitary situation, library material. Digital copies of books will be accepted as long as a proof that a full copy of the book has been consulted (via library purchase or interlibrary loans): references to generalist websites, fragments of Google books or other non-academic sources will not be accepted.
- 3. Thursday March 25:** A detailed plan (two pages) unfolding the articulation of your essay and the use of your sources; the document should present a refined version of your initial topic, modified in accordance to the research conducted.

4. **Thursday April 22** Research Essay: c. 4000 words without footnotes (or 5000 words long essay including footnotes) equivalent to c. 30 000 characters including spaces]. Sections should be clearly articulated; strong introductory and concluding paragraphs should be clearly formulated. Your essay should rely on a clear and pertinent body of references detailed in a bibliography and referenced in footnotes:

5. **Starting Monday April 19** An oral presentation including c. 10 images / visual documents supporting your argument. The presentation is nothing more than a summary of your essay. It should simply demonstrate your capacity to communicate your argument orally, in a clear and concise manner.

The essay is due on Thursday April 22. Request for extension will not be accepted after Monday April 12. A week extension can be granted. Grades for Degree Candidate are due May 18th – no final essay will be accepted after Monday May 3rd.

Plagiarism:

You must document all of your source material. If you take any text from somebody else, you must make it clear the text is being quoted and where the text comes from. You must also cite any sources from which you obtain data, ideas, or other material. If you have any questions about what does or does not constitute plagiarism, please ask your instructor. It is easy to avoid plagiarism by giving credit where credit is due.

Footnotes:

Zadie Smith, *Swing Time*, New York, Penguin Press, 2016), p. 315–16.

You will use the abbreviation *ibid.* to refers to a single work cited in the note immediately preceding. For instance

1. Zadie Smith, *Swing Time*, New York, Penguin Press, 2016), p. 315–16.

2. *ibid.*, p. 320.

You will use *op. cit.* in place of a previously cited title:

Zadie Smith, *Swing Time*, *op. cit.*, p. 400.

You will not use “shortened notes” (ex: Smith, *Swing Time*, 320) or “in-text citation” (ex: Smith 2016, 315)

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Please proofread your essay carefully before submission and eliminate any possible instance of plagiarism. If any trace of plagiarism, intentional or not, is detected your essay will receive a failing grade and the case will be reported to the **Office of Academic Integrity**.

Final Grade:

1. Topic formulation: 10%
2. Bibliography: 10%
3. Plan: 10%
4. Oral Presentation: 20%
5. Final Essay: 40%
6. Overall Presence and participation: 10%

Grading Scale: A Excellent (90–100); B+ Very Good (87–89) / B Good (80–86) C+ High Average (77–79) / C Average (70–76) D Poor (60–69) / F Failure (Below 60 / violation of academic integrity)

Other
