ART 464/564: Cultural Studies of the Museum
3 credits
TR 1000-1120 Fairbanks 314
Spring 2014
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Instructor Information
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ART 464/564 Course Description
What happens in museums? What cultural status do they hold? How do museums shape our understanding of art, history, culture, or nationality? According to the American Alliance of Museums, each year there are approximately 850 million visits to American museums. For reference, this is more than the attendance for all major league sporting events and theme parks combined. ART 464/564: Cultural Studies of the Museum, an Art History course, provides an overview of the history, visual culture, and cultural significance of the Western museum, from Renaissance cabinets of curiosity to 9/11 memorials. We will also look at recent controversies around museums, and pay special attention to artist’s projects that pertain to museums. All majors welcome.

Course Catalog Description
Overview of the history, visual culture, and cultural significance of the Western museum. Special attention paid to the development of the art museum and artist’s projects that pertain to museums. OTHER PREREQS: 9 credits of art history, or instructor approval required.

Required Learning Resources
• Course Reader, available at OSU bookstore

ART 464 Learning Outcomes
At the conclusion of this course, you will be able to:
• Identify broad historical developments within the Western museum from the Renaissance to the present
  o Demonstrated by participation in class discussions and journal entries
• Situate museums and museological discourse in cultural and historical contexts
  o Demonstrated by participation in class discussions, journal entries, case study presentation, and final project
• Compare and contrast the cultural functions of specialized museums (such as art, anthropology, and history museums)
  o Demonstrated by participation in class discussions and journal entries
• Analyze the construction of values and meanings within contemporary museums
  o Demonstrated by journal entries, case study presentation, and final project
• Evaluate the visual culture of museums, and the ways in which contemporary museums present their materials
  o Demonstrated by case study presentation and final project

ART 564 Learning Outcomes
At the conclusion of this course, you will be able to:
• Identify broad historical developments within the Western museum from the Renaissance to the present
- Demonstrated by participation in class discussions and journal entries
  - Situate museums and museological discourse in cultural and historical contexts
    - Demonstrated by participation in class discussions, journal entries, case study presentation, and final project
  - Critically analyze the cultural functions of specialized museums (such as art, anthropology, and history museums)
    - Demonstrated by participation in class discussions and journal entries
  - Critically analyze the construction of values and meanings within contemporary museums
    - Demonstrated by journal entries, case study presentation, and final project
  - Situate museum culture in the broad frameworks of critical theory, cultural studies, and visual culture
    - Demonstrated by case study presentation and final project

### ART 464 Evaluation of Student Performance

Your course grade is composed of assignment grades according to the following percentages:

- Attendance and Class Participation: 20%
- Journal: 40%
- Case Study Presentation: 10%
- Final Project (Research paper): 30%

### ART 564 Evaluation of Student Performance

Your course grade is composed of assignment grades according to the following percentages:

- Attendance and Class Participation: 10%
- Journal: 40%
- Case Study Presentation: 10%
- Final Project (Research paper): 40%

You will receive a percentage grade for each assignment. Grades will be posted on Blackboard.

Final letter grade distribution:

- A = 93-100; A– = 90-92; B+ = 88-89; B = 83-87; B– = 80-82; C+ = 78-79; C = 73-77; C– = 70-72; D = 60-69;
- F = under 60

There will be no extra credit assignments.

### Attendance and Class Participation

Attendance is mandatory. The lectures cover information that is largely additional to the readings. Please notify me by e-mail or phone (leave a message on my voice mail) if you cannot be present in class twice in a row. More than three unexcused absences will result in a lowered grade. Three substantial lates count as one absence.

Your class participation and attendance are evaluated separately. Class participation means listening actively, asking questions, offering comments, and participating in general discussions. In addition to your level of class participation, I will assess the degree of your course involvement. This means that the class participation component of your grade will reflect the thinking and effort you put into your questions and comments.

### Journal

The 2-3 page weekly journal records your response to the assigned readings. You may also incorporate themes and ideas from lecture and class discussions. Select a topic that interests you. In addition, the journal could easily provide ideas for your presentation and research paper. The journal should contain thoughtful analysis of specific information and your response to that information. Rather than attempt to cover the entire reading, select one motive or thread of thought from the class materials for in-depth analysis. A good journal entry combines an accurate representation (accompanied by a documentation of sources) of the readings with your own critical take on the matter. “Critical” here means that your journal demonstrates an attitude that is individual, analytical, thoughtful, and informed. It also requires you to consider multiple viewpoints, whether you agree or disagree with them. Journals for ART 564 require discussion of at least two of the readings. The journal promotes your critical thinking skills, engagement with the assigned readings, participation in class discussion, and ability to connect the course material to your broader intellectual development.
Each journal entry will be evaluated according to the following criteria:

- Evidence of critical thinking: Individual, thoughtful, and informed response to the readings, lectures, featured artwork, or class discussions; consideration of multiple points of view (6 pts)
- Connections made between class materials and your own ideas (2 pts)
- Clarity and precision in writing style (2 pts)

You will also receive a separate handout detailing the journal assignment.

**Case Study Presentation**

In preparation for your in-class presentation, you will be asked to visit a museum, document your visit with digital photographs, and analyze the museum based on one of your class readings. Then, you will create an in-class presentation, in which you integrate firsthand information of your museum visit to course materials, and present the museum of your choice to the class using one of the thematic angles covered in class.

Your presentation will be evaluated using the following criteria:

- Evidence of appropriate, thorough museum visit: 20%
- Sufficient visual documentation of visit: 20%
- Museum visit connected to course themes: 40%
- Evidence of critical thinking: 20%

**Final Project**

The final project for this course is a research paper that extends your case study presentation by framing it within the broader debates on museums. The length of the paper for ART 464 is ten pages, and twenty pages for ART 564. This project requires you to consult both required and further readings. You will receive a separate handout detailing the research paper assignment.

Your final project will be evaluated according to the following criteria:

- Accurate representation of issues and themes: 20%
- Sufficient consideration of thematic readings: 30%
- Evidence of critical thinking: 30%
- Evidence of reasoning: 10%
- Organization and writing mechanics: 10%

**Other Course Information**

**Books on Reserve**

- Sylvan Barnet, *A Short Guide to Writing about Art* (VR592)

**Order These Books through Summit:**
- Andrea Fraser, Isabelle Graw, Jens Hoffmann, Renee Green, Hans Haacke, Monica Bonvicini, Mike Kelley, John Searle, The Yes Men, John C. Welchman, *Institutional Critique and After* (JRP Ringier, 2006)

**Expectations for Student Conduct/Academic Honesty**

We will follow the ethical principles outlined in the OSU policy on academic honesty. It is your responsibility to know and follow this policy. A summary of this policy is located at http://oregonstate.edu/studentconduct/offenses.

Academic dishonesty is defined as an intentional act of deception in one of the following means:

- Cheating (use or attempted use of unauthorized materials, information or study aids)
- Fabrication ( falsification or invention of any information)
- Assisting (helping another commit an act of academic dishonesty)
- Tampering (altering or interfering with evaluation instruments and documents)
- Plagiarism (representing the words or ideas of another person as one’s own)

*Any form of academic dishonesty, such as cheating, will affect your grade and may lead to an “F” grade in this course. Cheating on an exam will result in an “F” grade for that exam.*

In particular, make sure you understand what plagiarism is. Plagiarism does not only mean using direct quotations without citing the source. Indirect quotation (or paraphrasing) also requires that you cite the source. Make sure you distinguish between your ideas and those of others; that way, you may engage in a meaningful discussion with established ideas and have a chance to emphasize your own thinking.

**Disability Notice**

Accommodations are collaborative efforts between students, faculty and Disability Access Services (DAS). Students with accommodations approved through DAS are responsible for contacting the faculty member in charge of the course prior to or during the first week of the term to discuss accommodations. Students who believe they are eligible for accommodations but who have not yet obtained approval through DAS should contact DAS immediately at (541) 737-4098.

**Questions?**

Don’t hesitate to get in touch with me, either after class or during my office hours. You can also e-mail me at kirsi.peltomaki@oregonstate.edu.
Course Calendar

All required readings come from your textbook (TB) or the course reader (CR). Most of the further readings are placed on reserve; look for books rather than photocopies.

Bring the readings with you to class—you will need to refer to the actual texts during class discussion.

April 1
Course Introduction

Remembrance and Commemoration

April 3
The Visual Culture of Memorials, Part 1
  • Video screening: Maya Lin: A Strong Clear Vision (83 min., 1995), on Maya Lin’s Vietnam War Memorial

April 8 (Journal Due)
The Visual Culture of Memorials, Part 2
  • Video screening: Sacred Ground (60 min., 2004), on Daniel Libeskind’s World Trade Center reconstruction project

April 10
The Visual Culture of Memorials, Part 3
  • Student-led discussion about the recent debates and developments around the reconstruction of the World Trade Center
  • TB Paul Williams, “The Memorial Museum Identity Complex: Victimhood, Culpability, and Responsibility,” 97-115

Further Reading
  • TB Alice Friman, “At The Holocaust Museum,” 116
  • Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, “Kodak Moments, Flashbulb Memories: Reflections on 9/11,” TDR: The Drama Review, 47 issue 1 (Spring 2003), 11-48
  • Natasha Goldman, “Israeli Holocaust Memorial Strategies at Yad Vashem: From Silence to Recognition,” Art Journal 65, no. 2 (Summer 2006), 102-122 (available through Academic Search Premier)

The Visual Culture of Museums

April 15 (Journal Due)
Strategies of Display

Further Reading
April 17
Strategies of Display, continued

The Western Art Museum: Historical Precedents, Disciplinary Models

April 22 (Journal Due)
Premodern Museums: Curiosity Cabinets and Royal Collections


Further Reading

April 24
The Universal Survey Museum

- TB Carol Duncan and Alan Wallach, “The Universal Survey Museum,” 46-61

Further Reading
- Eilean Hooper-Greenhill, Museums and the Shaping of Knowledge (London and New York: Routledge, 1992); Ch. 7, “The Disciplinary Museum”

April 29 (Journal Due)
Cultivating Distinction, Embodying Values

- TB Pierre Bourdieu and Alain Darbel, with Dominique Schnapper, “Conclusion to The Love of Art,” 453-456

Further Reading

May 1
Embodying Values: Funding and Power
Student-led discussions on recent debates involving the Detroit Institute of Arts
May 6 (Journal Due)

Representing Culture

- TB Robert Goldwater, “The Development of Ethnological Museums” (1938), 158-162

Further Reading

- TB Curtis M. Hinsley, Jr., “‘Magnificent Intentions’: Washington, D.C., and American Anthropology in 1846,” 129-141

May 8

Other Models of Culture in Museums

- TB Enid Schildkrout, “Ambiguous Messages and Ironic Twists: Into the Heart of Africa and The Other Museum,” 168-176

Further Reading


May 13 (Journal Due)

History on Display

- TB Susan A. Crane, “Memory, Distortion, and History in the Museum,” 303-316
- TB Mónica Risnicoff de Gorgas, “Reality as Illusion, the Historic Houses that Become Museums,” 324-328

Further Reading

- TB Catherine Ingraham, “Architecture and the Scene of Evidence,” 287-293
- Lawrence Weschler, Mr. Wilson’s Cabinet of Wonder (New York: Pantheon Books, 1995)
May 15

Institutional Critique


Further Reading

• Andrea Fraser, Isabelle Graw, Jens Hoffmann, Renee Green, Hans Haacke, Monica Bonvicini, Mike Kelley, John Searle, The Yes Men, John C. Welchman, Institutional Critique and After (JRP Ringier, 2006)

May 20 (Journal Due)

Institutional Critique, Part 2

May 22

Artists on Museums: Rethinking Representations

• TB Lisa G. Corrin, “Mining the Museum: Artists Look at Museums, Museums Look at Themselves,” 329-4346 (on Fred Wilson’s Mining the Museum)
• TB Gerald McMaster, “Museums and the Native Voice,” 377-382

Optional Reading

• Fred Wilson, Mining the Museum: An Installation (N6537.W546 A4 1994)
• Ivan Karp and Fred Wilson, “Constructing the Spectacle of Culture in Museums,” in Thinking About Exhibitions, ed. Reesa Greenberg, Bruce W. Ferguson and Sandy Nairn (London: Routledge, 1996), 251-67
• Ingrid Schaffner, Matthias Winzen, Geoffrey Batchen, and Hubertus Gassner, eds, Deep Storage: Collecting, Storing, and Archiving in Art (Munich: Prestel, 1998)

Case Studies: Analyzing Museums

May 27 (Journal Due)

Presentations

May 29

Presentations

June 3

Presentations

June 5

Presentations

Final Project (Research Paper) due during Finals Week on Tuesday, June 10 at noon.