UAB
Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona

Works and Debate in Art Today

Code: 100579
ECTS Credits: 6

2025/2026

Degree	Type	Year
Art History	OT	3
Art History	OT	4

Contact

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Teachers

Sandra Alvaro Sanchez

Teaching groups languages

You can view this information at the end of this document.

Prerequisites

There are no specific entry requirements. However, English proficiency is desired for working with the bibliography and reference materials. Showing interest in the current socio-politic challenges, as well as, for art and its relation with technology and society is also highly recommended.

Objectives and Contextualisation

Context

Woks and debates of Art Today address the events of a changing world throughout the analysis of contemporary art works and the involvement of art in the challenges and new visions arising from global society, science and technology.

From this point of view, the students will learn about the changes affecting the arts' subjects, media, and functions since Postmodernity, in conjunction with the theoretical referents that have allowed art to become a material-based method of research about how humans perceive, know, and situate themselves in a complex world. Summarising, the topic explores how art utilises all available media to confront societal issues and propose alternative futures.

Objectives

The situated analysis of current artistic production, the issues it faces, the media deployed and the theoretical references will enrich the formation of the students and give them tools and resources to develop their proposals.

Specific objectives:

- The students will gain knowledge of the contemporary creative environment and how it has evolved after the adoption of new technologies and media, as well as the concepts and values arising during the process.
- They will learn how to contextualise the evolution of new forms of artistic production, the formation of new creative environments and the outstanding artists, events and publications.
- They will understand the relationship between art, technology and society.
- They will know the concepts and theories that define the evolution of contemporary art.
- They will acquire the domain of the material and historical analysis of contemporary creations.
- They will be able to develop and substantiate an artistic or critical proposal.

Competences

Art History
- Critically analysing from the acquired knowledge a work of art in its many facets: formal values, iconographic significance, artistic techniques and procedures, elaboration process and reception mechanisms.
- Interpreting a work of art in the context in which it was developed and relating it with other forms of cultural expression.
- Recognising the evolution of the artistic imagery from the antiquity to the contemporary visual culture.
- Students must be capable of applying their knowledge to their work or vocation in a professional way and they should have building arguments and problem resolution skills within their area of study.
- Students must be capable of communicating information, ideas, problems and solutions to both specialised and non-specialised audiences.

Learning Outcomes

1. Accurately defining and explaining an artistic object with the specific language of art criticism.
2. Analysing ideas about an artistic phenomenon in a given cultural context.
3. Analysing the creators of an artistic phenomenon in a specific cultural context.
4. Analysing the recipients of an artistic phenomenon in a specific cultural context.
5. Applying the iconographic knowledge to the reading of artistic imagery.
6. Connecting an artistic imagery with other cultural phenomena within its period.
7. Distinguishing the elaboration techniques and processes of an artistic object.
8. Engaging in debates about historical facts respecting the other participants' opinions.
9. Examining an artistic imagery and distinguishing its formal, iconographic and symbolic values.
10. Explaining the reception mechanisms of a work of art.
11. Identifying the artistic imagery, placing it into its cultural context.
12. Reconstructing the artistic outlook of a particular cultural context.

Content

The program introduces the current art environment by analysing a set of selected artworks created in response to different subjects and deploying actual theoretical and methodological perspectives. The proposed case studies show art concerning the globalised world, gender and postcolonial studies, and new technologies, as well as its answer to challenges like the adoption of artificial intelligence, the collapse of natural resources and the recent geopolitical changes.

- Introduction: From postmodernity to Globalism

1. The End of the Modern ideology of progress and the appearance of new subjects
2. Art and Science at the end of the Twenty Century: The end of metanarratives and the Exhibition "Les Inmateriaux"
3. The end of modernity and the emergence of new media, new engagement with reality

- Art participation and democracy: The poetics of social media.

1. From Representation to process and participation
2. New Media Interactivity and Communication
3. Internet and the poetics of social media

- Art and gender: subjectivation and the disruption of discourse
- Art and Ecology: New visual paradigms and speculative worlds

Activities and Methodology

Title	Hours	ECTS	Learning Outcomes
Type: Directed			
Master classes	40	1.6	3, 4, 2, 11, 5, 1, 7, 9, 10, 8, 12, 6
Type: Supervised			
Written comentaries about artworks. Research work and oral presentation	40	1.6	3, 4, 2, 11, 5, 1, 7, 9, 10, 8, 12, 6
Type: Autonomous			
Individual preparation of homework	70	2.8	3, 4, 2, 11, 1, 9, 10, 8, 12, 6

The programme combines theory and practice. In this way, the students must complement the classroom work with the recommended lectures and materials. It is also needed regular attendance and active participation in the classroom sessions.

ATTENDANCE-BASED: We will dedicate the classroom sessions to the material and historical analysis of artworks from the current creative environment and related to the subjects proposed in the contents. Additionally, in this space, I will inform the students about cultural events and motivate them to participate actively in cultural city life.
To facilitate students' active involvement, they are required to work autonomously on the recommended texts and audiovisual materials facilitated via Moodle.
Finally, the classroom will be the stage for the students' participative interventions and oral presentations.

Along the course, the students will receive methodological and bibliographical tutorship to realise their assignments in private and group tutorial sessions.

Annotation: Within the schedule set by the centre or degree programme, 15 minutes of one class will be reserved for students to evaluate their lecturers and their courses or modules through questionnaires.

Assessment

Continous Assessment Activities

Title	Weighting	Hours	ECTS	Learning Outcomes
Assessment of classroom activities	10%	0	0	3, 4, 2, 11, 5, 1, 7, 9, 10, 8, 12, 6
Research assignment and oral presentation	30%	0	0	3, 4, 2, 11, 5, 1, 7, 9, 10, 8, 12, 6
Text analysis	30%	0	0	3, 4, 2, 11, 1, 7, 9, 10, 12, 6
Written test	30%	0	0	3, 4, 2, 11, 5, 1, 7, 9, 10, 8, 12, 6

Assessment Activities

- Attendance and active participation in the proposed debates and seminars, including previous preparation (10%)
- Research project (30%). Students will work in teams to develop a research project
- Written assessment (30%).
- Text commentary (30%)

Further description of each evaluation activity will be published at the beginning of the course

(Moodle)

Qualifications revision procedure

At the moment of realisation of each evaluative activity, the teacher will inform the students (Moodle) about the reassessment procedure and dates.

Reassessment procedure

To participate in recovery, students must have previously been evaluated in a set of activities whose weight equals a minimum of 2/3 of the total grade. Attendance and participation will be

non-recoverable.

Students will obtain a Not assessed/Not submitted course grade unless they have submitted more than 30% of the assessment items.

(*) In the event of a student committing any irregularity that may lead to a significant variation in the grade awarded to an assessment activity, the student will be given a zero for this activity, regardless of any disciplinary process that may take place. In the event of several irregularities in assessment activities of the same subject, the student will be given a zero as the final grade for this subject.

Single Assessment

Students who opt for a single assessment must complete three assessments:

- Research project (40%): the student must present a proposal based on the contents of the course and realise it following the instructions of the teacher
- Written exam (40%)
- A critical review of one of the mandatory lectures of the course (20%)

Structure and detailed instructions for each assessment will be indicated at the beginning of the course in the virtual campus. Also, the date of accomplishment

Recover is only available to students who have submitted all the activities and have a minimum degree of at least 3,5. Recovery will consist of the realisation of a presential exam and the recovery of all the exercises.

USE of AI

The use of AI technologies is only permitted in supportive tasks, such as translations, presentation design and the search of complementary sources of information. The student must identify which parts of their work he/she has generated with AI and add a critical reflection of the influence of this Technology in the attained results. The lack of transparency in the use of IA will be considered a lack of scholarly honesty and will be sanctioned.

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Software

If a specific program is needed, it will be notified in a timely manner

Groups and Languages

Please note that this information is provisional until 30 November 2025. You can check it through this link. To consult the language you will need to enter the CODE of the subject.

Name	Group	Language	Semester	Turn
(PAUL) Classroom practices	1	Catalan/Spanish	first semester	morning-mixed
(TE) Theory	1	Catalan/Spanish	first semester	morning-mixed