Syllabus

Kursbeschreibung

Titel der Lehrveranstaltung	Histories, Theories and Critical Interpretations of Art
Code der Lehrveranstaltung	47215
Zusätzlicher Titel der Lehrveranstaltung	
Wissenschaftlich-disziplinärer Bereich	ARTE-01/C
Sprache	Englisch
Studiengang	Master in Kritische Kreative Praxis
Andere Studiengänge (gem. Lehrveranstaltung)	
Dozenten/Dozentinnen	Prof. Dr. Inge Hinterwaldner, Inge.Hinterwaldner@unibz.it https://www.unibz.it/en/faculties/design-art/academic-staff/person/53246
Wissensch. Mitarbeiter/Mitarbeiterin	
Semester	Zweites Semester
Studienjahr/e	1st year
KP	6
Vorlesungsstunden	30
Laboratoriumsstunden	0
Stunden für individuelles Studium	120
Vorgesehene Sprechzeiten	18
Inhaltsangabe	This course provides students with a comprehensive exploration of the historical and theoretical frameworks shaping modern and contemporary art production. It emphasizes critical engagement with key topics, including the history of contemporary art, visual cultures, art theories, and art criticism, fostering a deep understanding of the intersections between art, technology, nature, and culture.

Themen der Lehrveranstaltung	- Histories, criticisms and theories of Contemporary Art - Visual Cultures and Image Studies - Navigating contemporary conditions: Digital Imagery, Platforms, Globalization and Contemporary Art - Topics and Politics of Visibility: Identity, Representation, Activism, Empowerment, Ecology, Colonialisms etc. - Contemporary collaborative art production The Jackson Pollock-Effect. Picking up seminal discourses in the US-American journal "October", key concepts and how they shifted can be observed. It also demonstrates how impactful art criticism is for politics and for the art market. Timely perspectives – foundational claims – rooted demonstration. This exemplary controversy prepares to discuss tendencies along which the matters of concern of art history, criticism and theory differ. The selected texts discuss (post)colonial and ecological topics. Inclusive and sustainable approaches are highlighted. Opening the field: From art to image. By analyzing case studies and texts from visual culture and image studies (1990s-2000s) and by engaging in critical discourse, students will familiarize themselves with as well as develop the analytical tools necessary to interpret and critique artistic works. Floating pixel: Turning digital, virtual, networked. Discourses around the post-photographical, digital, and post-digital allow for analysing the conceptual and medial underpinnings (such as photography, film, database, internet) of these theories. Thinking ahead carry traces of current and previous paradigms. Strategies between viral and unnoticed. The course introduces texts and artistic positions that thematize current conditions, such as surveillance, platformization, global distribution, blockchain, identity politics, activism. Collaborations: Agencies and intelligences in art production Eco Art and Bio Art include animals and plants and symbiosis in between. AI is conceived in a variety of ways: as (sparring) partner, (semi)autonomous producer, or tool. By analysing how diverse human and hybrid collaborations are enfolding, the students are empowered to reflect on their roles as creators, equipping them with the theoretical foundations to articulate and contextualize their practices within the broader landscape of art and design in the digital and global age.

Stichwörter	Form-medium-postmedium, hybrid formats, multiple perspectives: histories-criticisms-theories, contemporary art versus? new media art, globalization and network condition, plurification of intelligences/agencies in art production.
Empfohlene Voraussetzungen	No recommended prerequisite.
Propädeutische Lehrveranstaltungen	
Unterrichtsform	Through lectures, readings, exercises, and discussions, the course situates these topics within broader socio-political, ecological, and philosophical contexts, encouraging students to adopt ecocritical and decolonial perspectives that challenge traditional narratives and promote inclusive and sustainable approaches.
Anwesenheitspflicht	not compulsory
Spezifische Bildungsziele und erwartete Lernergebnisse	Educational objectives Analyze the Evolution of Contemporary Art. Develop a critical understanding of the history of contemporary art and its relationship with broader cultural, social, and political developments. Foster Ecocritical and Decolonial Perspectives. Equip students with the tools to critically evaluate traditional art narratives, emphasizing inclusive and sustainable approaches that address ecological and decolonial concerns. Examine the Impact of Globalization and Technology. Investigate how globalization, digital art, virtual reality, and social media shape contemporary art, its production, and its reception. Critique Identity and Representation in Art. Foster a nuanced understanding of identity, representation, and their intersections with contemporary art practices, emphasizing inclusivity and diversity. Develop Critical and Contextual Thinking. Equip students with the analytical tools to critique artistic works and articulate their creative practices within the complex intersections of art, technology, nature, and culture. Learning outcomes Knowledge and understanding:

	Knowledge of ecocritical theories and their applications in visual arts and design.
	Specific knowledge of artistic and design techniques that promote environmental sustainability.
	Understanding of the processes of interaction between artistic practices and natural context, analysing them while considering the connections with other fields of knowledge, such as philosophy, sociology and environmental sciences.
	Applying knowledge and understanding:
	Conceive and implement artistic and design projects that respond to contemporary environment challenges, using sustainable materials and ecological techniques.
	Develop initiatives that involve local and global communities, promoting greater awareness and action towards environmental sustainability.
	Collaborate with scientists, activists and other professionals to integrate interdisciplinary knowledge into artistic and design projects.
	Making judgements:
	Collect and interpret cultural and material data from the fields of art, design, technology and spatial and curatorial practices, demonstrating the ability to place events, works and production operations in the historical context and current trends.
	Grasp the authority and evaluate the reliability of the various available sources.
	Reflect and express an independent judgement, including on social, ethical and political-cultural issues.
	Interpret specific facts and events, within subject of their field of study.
	Communication skills:
	Writing scientific and technical articles and reports with clarity and effectiveness.
	Presenting projects and ideas verbally in a professional and

	convincing manner.
	Learning skills:
	The strengthening of the critical operational autonomy of students. The development of their ability to choose, compare and adapt to the new knowledge and technologies.
Spezifisches Bildungsziel und erwartete Lernergebnisse (zusätzliche Informationen)	Specific Educational Objectives and Learning Outcomes Critical and Contextual Thinking - Acquire knowledge about key debates from the 20th century and learn to bridge past, present and futures. - Develop a critical understanding of the history and historiography of contemporary art and its relationship with broader cultural, social, and political developments. - Interpret circumstances, events and technologies in relation to art. - Reflect and express an independent judgement, including on social, socio-technical, ethical and political-cultural issues. - Learn to map and articulate their creative practices within the art-related discourses and the complex intersections of art, technology, nature, and culture. Knowing about methods, their strengths and aims - Are equipped with methods and analytical tools to critically evaluate traditional and contemporary art narratives. - Apply these conceptual tools in further contexts. Knowing about contemporary conditions - Learn about digital and hybrid forms of expression. - Examine the impact of globalization, networked media, technologies, and ecological challenges and how they shape contemporary art, its production, scope, dissemination, and reception. - Become familiarized with urgent contemporary topics, emphasizing inclusivity and diversity. Communication skills - Professionally communicate and substantiate their own decisions and justify them from a theoretical point of view.

	- Accompany non-textual analyses in oral and written form. Learning skills - Strengthen complex and critical thinking and self-reflection. - Develop an ability to choose, compare and adapt to the new knowledge and technologies.
Art der Prüfung	Exercises during the semester (30%), oral exam at the end of the semester (70%).
Bewertungskriterien	The final evaluation is based on the following criteria: - Knowledge of the covered topics, perspectives and approaches. - Critical thinking and application of the theoretical positions to other examples (transfer knowledge). - Capabilities in analyzing and contextualizing art and texts about art.
Pflichtliteratur	Greenberg, Clement: Towards a New Laocoon, in: Partisan Review, VII,4, July-August 1940, pp. 296-310. Krauss, Rosalind: A Voyage on the North Sea: Art in the Age of the Post-Medium Condition, London: Thames & Hudson, 2000. Raven, Arlene: Two Lines of Sight and the Unexpected Connection: Helen Mayer Harrison and Newton Harrison [1987], in: Söntgen, Beate/Voss, Julia (eds.): Why Art Criticism? A Reader, Hatje Cantz: Berlin 2022, pp. 251-265. Boehm, Gottfried: Iconic Difference, in: Quené, Saskia C. (ed.): Between Figure and Ground. Seeing in Premodernity, Deutscher Kunstverlag: Berlin/Boston 2025, pp. 169-178. https://doi.org/10.1515/9783422801226-005 Belting, Hans: Image, Medium, Body: A New Approach to Iconology, in: Critical Inquiry, 31,2 (2005): pp. 302-319. Mitchell, W.J.T.: What Do Pictures Want? The Lives and Loves of Images, Chicago/London, The University of Chicago Press, 2005. (excerpts)

Amelunxen, Hubertus von/Iglhaut, Stefan/ Ro¨tzer, Florian (eds.): Photography after photography: memory and representation in the digital age, G+B Arts: 1996. (excerpts)

Steyerl, Hito: How Not To Be Seen: A Fucking Didactic Educational .MOV File, 14 min., 2013, in: YouTube, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LE3RlrVEyuo.

Kwastek, Katja: How to Be Theorized: A Tediously Academic Essay on the *New Aesthetic*, in: Berry, David M./Dieter, Michael (eds.): Postdigital Aesthetics: Art, Computation and Design, Palgrave Macmillan: London 2015, pp. 72–85. https://doi.org/10.1057/9781137437204_6 .

Tedone, Gaia: Tracing networked images: an emerging method for online curation, in: Journal of Media Practice, 18,1: Practice Symposium, 2017, pp. 51-62. https://doi.org/10.1080/14682753.2017.1305843.

MacKenzie, Adrian/Munster, Anna: Platform Seeing: Image Ensembles and Their Invisualities, in: Theory, Culture & Society, 36,5, 2019, pp. 3-22.

https://doi.org/10.1177/02632764198475

Meyer, Roland: 'Platform Realism'. AI Image Synthesis and the Rise of Generic Visual Content, in: Transbordeur, 9, 2025, pp. 1-18. https://doi.org/10.4000/13dwq

Whitaker, Amy: Art and Blockchain: A Primer, History, and Taxonomy of Blockchain Use Cases in the Arts, in: Artivate: A Journal of Entrepreneurship in the Arts, 8,2, Summer 2019, pp. 21-46. https://doi.org/10.34053/artivate.8.2.2

	Buik, Lisanne/Rotondi, Carmen: Designing with Intelligence. A gracious approach to AI-powered biodigital fabrication, in: Pau Alsina, Tere Badia and Andrés Burbano (eds.). Node «Arts, science, technology and society as a catalyst for change». Artnodes, 37, 2025. UOC. https://doi.org/10.7238/artnodes.v0i37.432976
Weiterführende Literatur	Further readings and teaching materials will be provided in class from time to time.
Weitere Informationen	
Ziele für nachhaltige Entwicklung (SDGs)	Hochwertige Bildung