



AH 325 THE STATE OF THE ART: CONTEMPORARY ITALIAN ARTISTS FROM 1945 TO THE PRESENT
IES Abroad Milan

DESCRIPTION:

Italy has always been a land of encounter for different artistic experiences. This course invites students to examine how this phenomenon developed in the field of visual arts during the second half of the 20th Century, in relation to the political, social and cultural growth of the country. How did artists meet and interact with the changes in culture, society and politics? Which cultural, social, or political roles did they play? How did the last 50 years change the category of visual arts as we know it today? How shall we study a work of contemporary art to understand its many levels of meaning? All of this will be examined and discussed with the students both in class and during field studies to museums, architectural landmarks, public art, and current exhibitions. An interdisciplinary approach will be used in order to clarify the concepts and present them in a broader cultural context.

CREDITS: 3

CONTACT HOURS: 45

LANGUAGE OF INSTRUCTION: English

PREREQUISITES: None

METHOD OF PRESENTATION:

Slides, Units, in-class discussions and field study trips to the following monuments/museums/events in Milan:

- The House-Museum Boschi-Di Stefano
- Museo del 900
- Gallerie d'Italia, a temporary exhibition or the studio of a Milan-based artist

Field studies will be an essential part of the course: this unique opportunity for a direct experience of monuments and works of art will provide remarkable help in the understanding and appreciation of art in Italy from 1945 to the present. The course will also feature guest speakers, including Italian artists, who will illustrate the role of art today.

REQUIRED WORK AND FORM OF ASSESSMENT:

- Course participation - 10%
- Midterm Exam - 40%
- Final Exam - 40%
- Research Paper - 10%

LEARNING OUTCOMES:

Upon completion of the course, students are expected to have a more specific and mature knowledge of the history of recent art, in Italy, but also on an international level, as each subject will include a thorough comparison to similar or contemporary facts in Europe and the United States. Students are also expected to mature a critical approach to art, and to be able to read and understand specific literature on the subject, a task for which an appropriate terminology will be provided. The field studies and the presentations of the final papers is set to improve the students' ability to speak in public and lead a discussion on artistic and cultural matters.

ATTENDANCE POLICY:

Regular class attendance is mandatory. IES Abroad Milano allows a maximum of THREE (3) excused absences per course before the final course grade is penalized. This margin is specifically intended to cover any absences arising from unavoidable and unexpected events or emergencies related to health, family, and religion. Each absence beyond the three excused ones will automatically result in a penalty of 2 points off (2/100) the final grade. SEVEN (7) absences per course will result in a failing grade (the three excused absences included).

Please note that this rule does not apply to exams: failure to attend your midterm and/or final exam will automatically result in an F grade on that exam. Absence on the date of other scheduled tests, presentations or quizzes does not entitle a student to



recover/reschedule such tests. If using absences for travel, students must be aware that they may find themselves in a situation in which they have no excusable absences left in case of illness.

CONTENT:

Present topic in a table with each row as a week, unit, or class, depending on course organization from instructor. Other columns could include topic/content, readings, assignments, field study, homework, etc.

Content within the cell can include ordered or bulleted lists. Bulleted lists are preferred for readings.

Week	Content	Assignments
Week 1	Introduction Overview of course and intro to Contemporary Art	
	Unit 2 – The 1950s and the Season of Informale	
	Unit 4 – Overcoming the 1950s I: Fontana’s late work and Fausto Melotti	
	Unit 5 – Overcoming the 1950s II: Arte Programmata and “Azimuth” Oct	
	Field Study: The Boschi-Di Stefano House-Museum	
	Midterm Exam	
	Unit 6 – Pop Art in Italy	
	Unit 7 – Deconstruction and Post-Modernism in Italy: Arte Povera and Transavanguardia	
	Post-Modernism and Post-Media Culture in Italy	
	Field Study: Museo del 900	
	Field Study: Gallerie d’Italia (or a current exhibition in a private space)	
	Final Exam	

COURSE-RELATED TRIPS:

- The Boschi-Di Stefano House-Museum
- Museo del 900
- Gallerie d'Italia

REQUIRED READINGS:

- All sources will be available in pdf format on Moodle

RECOMMENDED READINGS:

- Caramel, «The MAC Constellation», in *MAC*, exhibition catalogue, Niccoli, Parma 1996, pp. 43-69.
- J. Hamilton, «Making Art Matter. Alberto Burri's 'Sacchi'», *October*, 124, Spring 2008, pp. 31-52.
- E. Crispolti, *Lucio Fontana*, in L. M. Barbero (editor), *Lucio Fontana. Venice / New York*, The Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation, New York, 2006, pp. 51-81
- G. Celant, In Piero Manzoni's Territory, in G. Celant (editor), *Manzoni*, exhibition catalogue, MADRE Museo d'Arte Contemporanea Donnaregina, Naples, Electa, Milan, 2007 (English translation), pp. 14-45.
- W. Guadagnini, *Pop Art Italia 1958-1968*, Silvana Editoriale, Cinisello Balsamo, 2005 (texts in English).
- L. M. Barbero, Milan – Turin 1958-1968: Birth of an "Identity" and F. Pola, The Art Context in Milan and Turin: a Bipolar and Ramified Identity, in *Time & Place: Milano – Torino 1958-1968*, exhibition catalogue, Moderna Museet, Stockholm, Steidl Verlag, 2008, pp. 10-27, 56-67.
- A. Bonito Oliva, *Bel Canto Ahead, Torture Behind*, in I. Gianelli (ed.), *Transavanguardia*, Skira, Milano-Geneve, 2002, pp. 37-54.
- N. Spector, *The Aesthetics of Failure*, in Ead., *Maurizio Cattelan: All*, Guggenheim Museum Publications, New York 2011, pp. 23-44.
- Studio Azzurro. *Ambienti sensibili (Sensitive environments)*, exhibition catalogue, Palazzo delle Esposizioni, Rome, Electa, Milan 1999 (English translation), pp. 15-16, 18, 21-23, 29-30, 32, 39-40, 67-68, 70-72, 147-167.
- L. Fontana, *Manifiesto blanco*, 1946; P. Manzoni, *For the discovery of a zone of images*, 1957; U. Eco, *Arte programmata*, 1962; G. Celant, *Arte Povera*, 1967-69