

Contemporary Art (1945-present)  
ART 210  
Spring 2010  
Thursday, 1-330pm  
Casey McDonough

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**Required Text:**

Lucie-Smith, Edward. Movements in Art Since 1945.

**Course Objectives and Description:**

This course is intended to provide students with a sense of familiarity and understanding concerning important developments in contemporary art occurring since 1945. Classes will center on lectures and discussions, with further material inquest occurring through oral presentations and written assignments.

Students should finish the semester with a strong understanding of the nature of contemporary art, including the impetus for major movements as well as the mechanisms through which one movement in art can lead to another.

**Requirements:**

1. Reaction Papers – students will write 3 reaction papers during the semester. Each paper will be in response to one of these topics:
  - beauty/ugliness
  - Contemporary gallery exhibition review
  - Response to an article from an art magazine/journal from 2007 until present. (Art in America, Art News, etc.)

These papers are intended to inform and direct the ongoing discussions during class time. Papers should address your own perspective; be clear and concise when providing your responses, using ideas and terminology discussed in class. Think about this as an opportunity to provide true critical analysis of what you read and/or see (instead of just a summary). Each paper should be at least two full pages long (12pt, double-spaced).

2. Individual Presentations – students will provide a 10 minute presentation on a chosen topic or artist. Topics must be selected by midterm, and must receive my approval. Each presentation should include biographical information, images of important or interesting work, and background information concerning content and concepts behind the work. Each presentation should include a written summary of at least 4 pages (12pt, double-spaced).

3. Final Paper – students will hand in a research paper based on their understanding of the ideas, movements, and artists discussed in class. Avoid a simple summarization of the semester’s discussions, but rather provide insight into what you found interesting and how you see contemporary art fitting in as an essential component of contemporary cultural development (or how you don’t see it as such). Papers should be 6 pages (12pt, double-spaced).

**Grading:**

The primary component of this course is open classroom dialogue, and as such your participation is essential. Everyone in the class should be willing to share her perspective at any time. Grades will be determined based upon the following percentages:

Reaction papers (3)	25%
Individual presentation	25%
Class participation	25%
Final paper	25%

**Attendance Policy:**

Attendance is mandatory; I intend to be inflexible on this subject, as each week will be as important as the rest. While I appreciate when you call or email ahead to tell me that you will not be in attendance, this will still count towards your overall tally of absences. I am unwilling to repeat lectures, so you will have to rely on your peers for help in catching up. I am willing to be reasonable in certain circumstances (death, serious illness, etc.), in which case come find me and we will talk. My attendance policy is as follows:

- 4 absences and you will lose one letter from your overall grade
- 5 absences and you will receive a failing grade for the course

**Honor Code and Classroom Conduct:**

We who accept the honor of the membership in the Cedar Crest College community recognize our obligation to act and encourage others to act with honor. The Honor Philosophy exists to promote an atmosphere in which the individual makes her own decisions, develops a regard for the system under which she lives and achieves a sense of integrity and judgment in all aspects of her life. It is with faith in such a system that I have accepted membership into this community. Representative of such, I hereby pledge to uphold the spirit and the letter of the Honor Philosophy.

Appropriate classroom behavior is implicit in the Cedar Crest College Honor Code. Such behavior is defined and guided by complete protection for the rights of all students and faculty to a courteous, respectful classroom environment. That environment is free from distractions such as late arrivals, early departures, inappropriate conversations and any other behaviors that might disrupt instruction and/or compromise students’ access to their CCC education.

**Tentative Schedule:**

January 21

Introduction  
Video (“Artists at Work”)

January 28

Lecture – What happened to cause this to happen?

February 4

Lecture – The Abstract Expressionists

February 11

Lecture – Pollock, Krasner and Friends  
Video (Pollock)

February 18

Lecture – Giacometti  
Art Brut, Outsider Art  
Video (“Painters painting”)

February 25

Lecture - Rauschenberg, Oldenburg, Johns

March 4

Lecture – Joseph Bueys  
British Pop

**Individual Presentation Topics due**

March 11

Spring Break, NO CLASS

March 18

Lecture – Pop Art, Warhol, Lichtenstein, West Coast Pop/Funk

March 25

*Reaction Paper: review of article in journal/magazine*  
Lecture – Minimalism, Process Art, Earthworks  
Eva Hesse

Individual Presentations

April 1

I am at a conference, NO CLASS!

April 8

Lecture – Postmodernism, Conceptual Art, Performance Art

Individual Presentations

Assignment – Assigned readings on Feminism

April 15

*Reaction Paper: gallery review*

Lecture – Feminism

Individual Presentations

April 22

Lecture – American Neo Expressionism, Graffiti Art  
Basquiat

Individual Presentations

April 29

Lecture – conclusions

Individual Presentations

May 6

Individual Presentations (if necessary)

*Final Papers due, via email or in my mailbox*