Dr. Shabout

Office: Tuesday and Thursday 2:20-3:20, or e-mail me
E-mail: nada.shabout@unt.edu

Do like AEAH Facebook page at https://www.facebook.com/untaeah for posting of related information and opportunities.
AND for your own good, you should create a profile on www.LinkedIn.com.

Course Description:
Art is always political. However, art from the Arab world and the Middle East is generally received in the West in connection to wars and conflicts. This notion assumes a direct correlation in the production of this art to politics, war and terrorism. Meanwhile the new discourse is rethinking contemporary art during what it perceives as a global crisis considering recent geopolitical, economic and health crises and their impact on visual culture and artistic practice. This course investigates the relationship between culture, power, and politics, drawing on a wide range of comparative cases. The course provides the context for modern and contemporary arts and cultures of mostly the Arab part of the region, as they were formed in connection to Islam and secular modern history. We will start by formulating an understanding of Arab art in terms of production, reception, exhibition and value, in both local and global markets, through exploring and reevaluating discourses of culture, identity, and globalization. The course explores specific case studies of cultural policy, national ideology, and historical patrimony and the political role of the arts in a transnational context through the work of specific artists.

Course Requirements:
All required readings are on Canvas. Given that this course is taught remotely, you do need to have access to a computer with internet access. You will need to upload and download text and images on Canvas for asynchronous meetings. At times you will need a digital camera—your smartphone camera is fine. You will also need Zoom for synchronous meetings. You are required to be seen as part of zoom discussion sessions. For that You’ll need a webcam.

Course Objectives:
1. Further develop your critical thinking, speaking, writing and research skills.
2. To develop and practice the skills needed to think critically about relationships between politics and visual production.
3. To develop an understanding of key concepts, methodologies and terminologies for modern and contemporary art from the Arab world and larger Middle East.
A Note on Remote Learning

I understand that each of you is living in a very different situation under the pandemic restrictions, and this very may well include more responsibilities and distractions than before. I am also aware that the current situation is emotionally draining and that you may have friends and family that depend on you for emotional and/or physical support. It is my goal for this course to provide some relief, not to cause you further stress or anxiety. Don’t hesitate to reach out if you feel overwhelmed because we can adjust this course and its requirements in ways that are beneficial to you, as an individual and as a class community.

Because the situation we face is changing daily- within both our communities and our individual lives- I will adjust the syllabus if necessary to account for unexpected changes. To the best of your ability, I ask that you keep me posted if you are no longer able to participate in the course for a period of time, for whatever reason, so that together we can make this semester successful for you academically. I am here to make sure that happens for all of you.

As with any group technology effort, there will be kinks. Don’t panic if something simply doesn’t work and you miss an entire class or can’t upload an assignment. This is going to happen, so relax and know that it’s going to take time to sort out all the inevitable kinks of remote learning. I am here to catch you up on anything you miss.

Requirements and Evaluation:

This is a course that meets for 3 hours every week. We will have both synchronous via Zoom class time as well as asynchronous discussion boards on Canvas.

You will be evaluated on your preparedness and performance in the course. You will also be evaluated on the organization, thoughtfulness, and resourcefulness of your writing assignments. Every student is expected to fully participate in the course.

Grading System:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class Component</th>
<th>Weight of Grade</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Class Participation</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussions and Assignments</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Project</td>
<td>40%</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Course Structure

Zoom Classes:

- We will hold a zoom class every week for live discussion.
- Class time will include short lectures, student presentations, and discussions. The material to be covered in the zoom class are noted in throughout the course schedule so that students can “come to class” prepared and ready to discuss and ask questions.
- If you are unable to attend the zoom class, please email me to work on an alternative solution.

Assignments

Designated students will be responsible for a virtual reading presentation that will take the form of initiating a discussion thread based on the readings for that week. Your thread should provide a brief outline of the reading’s main arguments and 2 questions for discussion on the thread.
Topics for the discussion thread can relate to specific images or the readings. Uploaded related images encouraged!

**Discussion Threads**

For each discussion thread, there will be a guiding topic and/or question. You are required to submit 2-3 entries (100-250 words/per response). The course discussion thread will be posted on Thursday (5:00 pm CDT) of the week by the designated students. You will be given time to respond during class. Your responses will be collectively graded based on their thoughtfulness, thoroughness, and ability to make connections across course material.

**Criteria:**

- Read the postings submitted by other students. Threaded discussions provide the opportunity for interaction and learning from one another. This requires you to follow the posts of other students in your discussion group.
- Make reference to the relevant material from the text and other assigned readings.
- Make reference to information or ideas expressed by your classmates in their posts.

**Final Project and Presentations:** You have the option to choose from the below.

1. **Art History Paper:** (10-15 pages): In this paper, you will explore one of the themes of the course through a case study in its historical, cultural, and personal contexts. Papers should be typed, double spaced, with 12 point font and 1” margins.

2. **Exhibition Projects:** (5 pages): You may choose to complete an exhibition project in lieu of the Research Paper. You will still have to submit an abstract by the dates listed above. You could choose to work with a partner. You are to curate an exhibition on the theme of Art and politics with art from the MENA region or its diaspora. You will need to include at least 15 works of art in your exhibition and develop accompanying “label/wall text”—name of artist, date, media, dimensions, etc. In some cases, and for certain works, you might need to provide extended labels contextualizing the work. You will also submit a 5-7 page paper outlining the premise of your exhibition, its major themes, its historical context/s, a list of its included artworks, and its value to the art historical community. You will need to include bios of your artists and reasons why you chose them. You will then present your exhibition in class. How you chose to organize the exhibition and the presentation is up to you as long as it is coherent and well communicated. **Be creative!**

3. **Studio Project:** (5-7 pages): MFA students may choose to complete a studio project in lieu of the Research Paper. You will still have to choose and provide an abstract by the dates listed above. For the studio project you will investigate the course topic by producing a work of art that explores an aspect of a chosen theme. This can be interpreted in many different ways and you are encouraged to be creative. You will then write a 5-page paper outlining the arguments and motivations behind your created work. Check class schedule for dates and deadlines.

**Policy on Quality of Written Work:**

Translating visual signs into verbal language is not an easy task. Thus, in the visual and subjective realm of art history, clarity of presented ideas is vital. Therefore, your written work will be evaluated in terms of proper grammar, syntax, and spelling, as well as the clear and
logical presentation of ideas and argument. If you make errors in any of these areas consistently, your grade will be lowered. Any student needing or desiring certain kinds of assistance or general support in matters of writing should visit the University Writing Center.

Some warnings and guidelines: Be sure and proofread for spelling and grammar errors! If you have problems with your writing, feel free to seek out help from the University Writing Center. The Writing Center is located in Rm 105 of the Auditorium Building. The services are open to all students, free of charge. M-F 8am to 5pm. 565-2563. www.unt.edu/writinglab/.

Papers must be formatted in 12-point font with 1” margins.
Save all work. That means save soft on your computer and on a back-up of your choice. Also, save hard copies. We will not accept excuses for lost work, printers out of cartridges or computers crash. Always plan for the worst and hope for the best when it comes to your technology. Always save your paper on a disc, and save often!! That way, if you have a problem with a hard drive or printer, you can go immediately to another computer to finish your work.

Not all computers are created equal. To guarantee success, use computers in the computer lab in the Art Building and not in your dorm, the library, Student Center, or even your own at home unless you are sure of its capability.

**Cheating and Plagiarism Policy:**

Cheating and plagiarism are serious offenses and violate UNT’s Code of Student Conduct. Any suspected act of dishonesty will result in a grade of “F” in the course. Further, the professor will write a letter to the Dean of the School of Visual Arts and the Dean of Students, who will pursue disciplinary actions at their discretion. Cheating includes looking at another student’s test for any reason.

According to the Center for Student Rights and Responsibilities, plagiarism is defined as “the deliberate adoption or reproduction of ideas, words or statements of another person as one’s own without acknowledgement” (www.unt.edu/csrr). Copying material from any source without providing a citation (footnote or endnote) is a form of plagiarism. Likewise, if you paraphrase another author’s words or ideas, you must credit that person with a citation. While most incidents of plagiarism at the graduate level are unintentional, it is your responsibility to ensure that you accurately indicate which words and ideas are those of others.

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**Acceptable Student Behavior:**

Student behavior that interferes with an instructor’s ability to conduct a class or other students' opportunity to learn is unacceptable and disruptive and will not be tolerated in any instructional forum at UNT. Students engaging in unacceptable behavior will be directed to leave the classroom and the instructor may refer the student to the Center for Student Rights and Responsibilities to consider whether the student's conduct violated the Code of Student Conduct. The university's expectations for student conduct apply to all instructional forums, including
university and electronic classroom, labs, discussion groups, field trips, etc. The Code of Student Conduct can be found at www.unt.edu/csrr.

**Sexual Discrimination, Harassment, Assault**

UNT is committed to providing an environment free of all forms of discrimination and sexual harassment, including sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking. If you (or someone you know) has experienced or experiences any of these acts of aggression, please know that you are not alone. The federal Title IX law makes it clear that violence and harassment based on sex and gender are Civil Rights offenses. UNT has staff members trained to support you in navigating campus life, accessing health and counseling services, providing academic and housing accommodations, helping with legal protective orders, and more.

**American Disabilities Act:**

The College of Visual Arts and Design is committed to full academic access for all qualified students, including those with disabilities. In keeping with this commitment and in order to facilitate equality of educational access, faculty members in the College will make reasonable accommodations for qualified students with a disability, such as appropriate adjustments to the classroom environment and the teaching, testing, or learning methodologies when doing so does not fundamentally alter the course.

If you have a disability, it is your responsibility to obtain verifying information from the Office of Disability Accommodation (ODA) and to inform me of your need for an accommodation. Requests for accommodation must be given to me no later than the first week of classes for students registered with the ODA as of the beginning of the current semester. If you register with the ODA after the first week of classes, your accommodation requests will be considered after this deadline.

Grades assigned before an accommodation is provided will not be changed. Information about how to obtain academic accommodations can be found in UNT Policy 18.1.14, at www.unt.edu/oda, and by visiting the ODA in Room 321 of the University Union. You also may call the ODA at 940.565.4323.

**Course Risk Factor:**

According to University Policy, this course is classified as a category one course. Students enrolled in this course will not be exposed to any significant hazards and are not likely to suffer any bodily injury. Students will be informed of any potential health hazards or potential bodily injury connected with the use of any materials and/or processes and will be instructed how to proceed without danger to themselves and others.

**Center for Students Rights and Responsibilities:**

Each student at UNT is entitled to certain rights associated with higher education institutions. See www.unt.edu/csrr for further information.
Useful Resources:

**Aramco World:** We produce *AramcoWorld* to increase cross-cultural understanding by broadening knowledge of the histories, cultures and geography of the Arab and Muslim worlds and their global interconnections, past and present. In print, *AramcoWorld* is distributed six times a year, without charge, to a limited number of interested readers; online, it is published on this site and available in tablet and mobile editions using the *AramcoWorld* app. Back issues from 1960 are searchable, and texts are available in full; photographs from archival articles are online from 2004 to the present.

**Artsy:** features the world’s leading galleries, museum collections, foundations, artist estates, art fairs, and benefit auctions, all in one place. Our growing database of 800,000 images of art, architecture, and design by 70,000 artists spans historical, modern, and contemporary works, and includes the largest online database of contemporary art. Artsy is used by art lovers, museum-goers, patrons, collectors, students, and educators to discover, learn about, and collect art. [https://www.artsy.net/artists](https://www.artsy.net/artists).

**CULTURUNNERS:** an independent arts organisation which supports artists journeys and production across physical and ideological borders: [http://culturunners.com/#](http://culturunners.com/#)

**e-flux:** Announcements about contemporary art exhibitions, events, and publications: [www.eflux.com](http://www.eflux.com).

**Hyperallergic:** a daily online art publication on art and the art world: [http://hyperallergic.com](http://hyperallergic.com)

**Ibraaz:** Initiated by the Kamel Lazaar Foundation in 2011, *Ibraaz* is the leading critical forum on visual culture in North Africa and the Middle East. We publish an annual online platform – consisting of essays, interviews, artists’ projects, and platform responses – that focuses on research questions conceived through a network of editorial contributors based in the Middle East and beyond. Our key editorial aim is to publish, alongside work by internationally renowned writers, academics, curators, activists, and filmmakers, emerging writers and artists: [https://www.ibraaz.org](https://www.ibraaz.org).

**The Mathaf Encyclopedia of Modernism and the Arab World:** The bilingual Mathaf Encyclopedia is a free online scholarly resource providing basic facts and in depth information on modern art of the Arab world: [http://www.encyclopedia.mathaf.org.qa/en/Pages/default.aspx](http://www.encyclopedia.mathaf.org.qa/en/Pages/default.aspx)

**Nafas Art Magazine:** Nafas was developed by Universes in Universe - Worlds of Art (UiU) commissioned by the ifa, and published since March 2003 as one of the first online magazines for contemporary art from the Maghreb to the Middle East, from Central to Southeast Asia: [http://u-in-u.com/nafas/](http://u-in-u.com/nafas/).

**Routledge Encyclopedia of Modernism:** An accessible and intuitive online platform, Routledge Encyclopedia of Modernism brings together a wealth of interdisciplinary content about the Modernist period, and is the ideal starting point for any research in modernism. Access through UNT Library: [https://libproxy.library.unt.edu:4199](https://libproxy.library.unt.edu:4199)

**Selections:** a bi-monthly magazine with high quality content on all subjects related to Art, Culture, Design, and Style: [http://www.selectionsarts.com/category/art/](http://www.selectionsarts.com/category/art/)
Disclaimers

Content in the arts can sometimes include works, situations, actions, and language that can be personally challenging or offensive to some students on the grounds, for example, of sexual explicitness, violence, or blasphemy. The College of Visual Arts and Design is devoted to the principle of freedom of expression, artistic and otherwise, and it is not the college’s practice to censor these works or ideas on any of these grounds. Students who might feel unduly distressed or made uncomfortable by such expressions should withdraw at the start of the term and seek another course.

The professors reserve the right to alter this syllabus if and when necessary

Course Outline:

For the latest news on culture and politics always consult
http://www.merip.org
http://www.jadaliyya.com

1- August 27th

Introduction and Terminologies

Review of Syllabus and Introduction to topic

Read:


In Class Assignment 1: Please introduce yourself, your area of interest, including what you think you already know about the Arab World/Middle East, what questions about representation of the region or the topic of art and politics in general, you are hoping to explore, and how you hope this course may help you reach your goals.

Questions to consider: What is the Middle East? North Africa? The Arab World? Who are the Arab? Who are the Muslims? What is the Muslim World? Countries? How are they different than the Arab? Think of 3 specific points/issues of interest or concern in relation to these questions and be prepared to present and discuss them in class.

Asynchronous Assignment:

Watch:

Inside the Middle East > Pioneers, https://discover.library.unt.edu/catalog/b6206118
Inside the Middle East > Artistic firsts, https://discover.library.unt.edu/catalog/b6206104
Inside the Middle East > Artistic revolutionaries, https://discover.library.unt.edu/catalog/b6206101
Inside the Middle East > Fashion, https://discover.library.unt.edu/catalog/b6206110
Inside the Middle East > Architectural legacy, https://discover.library.unt.edu/catalog/b6206107
Marketplace Middle East > Art business, https://discover.library.unt.edu/catalog/b6206290

2 – September 3rd                 Civic and Cultural Destruction

Read:

Christiane Gruber, “We can’t breathe”—how George Floyd’s killing is shaping Middle Eastern protest: Activists are using the iconography of the “American martyr” to fight their own political battles, August 5, 2020.

“Why do we care about statues?,” https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/w3cszl3k?fbclid=IwAR0iopfqr31FO-s0y-3079rf20Af0HNikKtF_dnuJJxvJuSoB0U7fYBJ9wv0

Rebecca Anne Proctor, “Huge explosion in Beirut decimates city and leaves art scene in disarray,” August 5, 2020, https://www.theartnewspaper.com/news/beirut-explosion?fbclid=IwAR1Aae8x2WOCxAvgRAY-bgnqJA9_oZiD1eIs-1npFxUul7YygCc0pdI

Naomi Rea, ‘I Doubt It Is Worth Reopening’: Art Spaces in Beirut Are Decimated by the City’s Deadly Explosions: https://news.artnet.com/market/beirut-explosion-galleries-1899782?fbclid=IwAR3WJc1iWyuq4tsPoQBhi6GuzlN2kmEmIdLU65ZEpmu2D8j5nh_FxwHXP34


Watch:

Once upon a Time in Iraq, Frontline, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T2L4jcVq08s.


Read:


Watch:

4 – September 17th

Read:
Salwa Mikdadi, “Gender and Politics in Contemporary Art: Arab Women Empower the Image.”
Angie Jaime, “The ‘Art World’ Can’t Exist in a Decolonized Future: “If you take away imperial plunder, what else do you have to offer?” https://www.teenvogue.com/story/decolonize-art-photography?fbclid=IwAR27XS1YF3wuEQuMGFLIsDTV2Rlj64IBpzLgu3lyBNs8Hmq9FZe0FIMnPCQ

Watch:

5 – September 24th

Read:
Watch: Morad Montazami – The Casablanca Art School: platforms and patterns of the postcolonial avant-garde. Morad Montazami is presenting the collective activities of the artists (and writers) leading the Casablanca Art School and their localization in post-Independence Morocco's artistic scene and a local as well as trans-national avant-garde. https://www.lenbachhaus.de/en/visit/whats-on/date/symposium-1157?tx_lbhadapter_showdates%5BcalDate%5D=29042020&cHash=f916e284372ff4ed640258d8dcd89313.

6 – October 1st

The Art of Nation

Read:


Nada Shabout – "A New School of Painting:" The Baghdad Group for Modern Art

Nada Shabout introduces "A New School of Painting", focusing on the Baghdad Group of Modern Art, formed in 1951, and its central role in the invention of a specific modern visual identity in Iraq. Symposium, GROUP DYNAMICS: Collectives of the Modernist Period, https://www.lenbachhaus.de/en/visit/whats-on/date/symposium-1157?tx_lbhadapter_showdates%5BcalDate%5D=29042020&cHash=f916e284372ff4ed640258d8dcd89313.

7 – October 8th

Art and Terror

Read:


Watch:


Wafaa Bilal discusses Shoot an Iraqi, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DcyquvDEe0o
8 – October 15th

**Art, statelessness and transnational communities**

**Read:**


Reem Shadid, Ayreen Anastas and Rene Gabri, organizers, Exit Plans, 
[https://publication.ashkalalwan.org/exit-plans/](https://publication.ashkalalwan.org/exit-plans/).

**Watch:**

“Mirrors of Diaspora’ With Afifa Aleiby. 7 living artists escaping Iraq in the 90’s.
[https://vimeo.com/241790911](https://vimeo.com/241790911), To watch, the password: Baghdad

Online Cultural Majlis: Samia Halaby 8th April 2020,
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yoNkM5kQGG4&list=PLICdXXQFLLfWVaQzjnZV5M1IM5LInFxBdg&index=3&t=0s](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yoNkM5kQGG4&list=PLICdXXQFLLfWVaQzjnZV5M1IM5LInFxBdg&index=3&t=0s).

**Final papers/projects topic discussion in class**

9 – October 22nd

**Art and Torture**

**Read:**


Lamia Joreige, “What we are left with,” 2009.


Watch:

Ghosts of Abu Ghraib, On HBO

10 – October 29th

Subverting Politics

Read:


Brian Whitaker, Unspeakable Love: Gay & Lesbian Love in the Middle East. European representations, 57-61; Depictions in Arab cinema, 89-97.

Write Down, I am an Arab, UNT Online

11 – November 5th

Art and Uprisings

Read:


Watch:

Final paper/project abstract due

12 – November 12th  ----------------------------------------  Art and Uprisings 2

Read:


13 – November 19th  ----------------------------------------  Final Project-Class Presentations

14 – November 26th  ----------------------------------------  Thanksgiving

No Class

15 – December 3rd  ----------------------------------------  Final Project-Class Presentations