



ARTH 4813 – Postmodernism (PoMo)
Spring 2026
Mondays and Wednesdays 5-6:20pm
ART 280

Instructor: Dr. Tiffany Floyd

Email: Tiffany.Floyd@unt.edu

Office Hours: Wednesdays 2-3pm in ART 244 or by appointment

*Yinka Shonibare, *Diary of a Victorian Dandy*: 14.00 hours, 1998

Attention is the rarest and purest form of generosity

-Simone Weil (1909-1943)

letter to Joë Bousquet, 13 April 1942; Simone Pétrement *Simone Weil: A Life* (1976) tr. Raymond Rosenthal

Course Description

This course will explore the theories and practices of Postmodern artists by discussing frameworks of engagement, including the pervasiveness of identity politics, along with new modes of artistic communication, focusing on the increasing use of non-traditional artforms like performance and immersive installation, that prevailed in the art world during the second half of the twentieth century.

Course Objectives

- To understand the broad theoretical principles of Postmodernism, as well as the contextual circumstances that spurred its development
- To apply those principles to artistic practices beginning around 1960
- To discuss issues, themes, and debates related to Postmodernism in relation to specific artworks and art-related events
- To synthesize class discussions and assigned readings in response to directed questions on artworks that we have not viewed in class
- To conduct individual analyses on an artist and their relation to issues brought up in class

Course Readings

All course readings will be posted on Canvas, organized by class day. There are no required textbooks for this course. Please prepare the assigned readings *prior* to their listed class day.

Course Requirements and Grading

Class 'Conversation Starters' – 10%

1 Documentary Film Response Paper – 15%

1 Exhibition Response Paper – 15%

1 Artist Response Paper + Presentation – 20%

3 Group Discussion Posts – 30%

1 Group In-Class Presentation – 10%

Class 'Conversation Starters' (10%)

This course is not structured as a strict lecture. Discussion, presentation, collective analysis, and other forms of participation will be fundamental to our learning throughout the Spring session. Thus, you are required to attend and participate. I will take attendance at the beginning of each class, and you are encouraged to speak up! To help track attendance and participation, you will have Class 'Conversation Starters' – short class prep assignments – to complete for most class meetings as listed in the syllabus. There will be 18 in all (0.5 pts for each) + 1 pt (.25 each) for attendance on group presentation days. These assignments will be given as canvas quizzes and will be due before the start of each class. ***Receiving credit on your conversation starter is contingent on your presence in class.*** If you turn in your conversation starter but are not in class that day – you will not receive points.

1 Documentary Film Response Paper – 750-1250 words (15%)

You will be assigned to watch 1 documentary film outside of class. You will respond to this film using information from class discussions and readings. You will also think about the film's approach and address how it added to your understanding of Postmodernism.

1 Exhibition Response Paper – 750-1250 words (15%)

You will respond to a current exhibition (TBD). You will be required to visit the exhibition. There will be a scheduled class visit that will include transportation from the Art Building to the museum and back, as well as the cost of the ticket.

1 Artist Response Paper + Presentation – 750-1250 words (20%)

You will choose an artist and write a paper responding to their practice, detailing how their work engages with topics discussed in class and in course readings. You will then do a presentation (either in class or in a recorded presentation) at the end of the semester.

3 Group Discussion Posts (30%)

Throughout the session, you will conduct a parallel online discussion. This assignment will require you to engage with a controversy that was (and is sometimes still) spurred by Postmodern art. You will provide a 300-word response to a specific prompt and then will respond to one of your classmate's posts with a 100-word response. To help facilitate this online discussion, you will be placed in groups.

1 In-Class Group Presentation (10%)

In groups, you will conduct one in-class presentation. For this presentation, each member of the group will choose an artist that engages with one of the 'modes of communication' – Conceptual Art/PoMo Painting, Performance Art, Land Art/Site-Specific Art, Installation/Sculpture, Video/Photography. You will then come up with a series of discussion questions with which to engage the class. You will have the entire class to do this presentation. See schedule.

More detailed descriptions of each assignment will be posted to canvas

Course Policies

Late work

Please endeavor to turn your assignments in on time. This is important for keeping the class on track, especially considering how the assignments are structured. Unless there are extenuating circumstances, ***no late work will be accepted***. If these circumstances cause you to miss a deadline, then **you will have 3 days from the deadline** to turn in your work for credit. Please communicate with me about missing assignments as soon as possible, do not wait until these 3 days have passed to let me know that you will be turning in your assignment. This extension *does not apply* to work due at the end of the semester or to your group presentation.

Attendance

Your attendance in class is required. I will take attendance in each class and will offer no excused absences for any reason. However, it is always good to communicate with me if you miss class. Your attendance grade will be assessed through the Class 'Conversation Starter' Assignments. ***If you miss a class, you can complete a make-up assignment = a one-full-page summary of one of the readings for the day that you missed (to be turned before the next class day via canvas). *You must ALSO have completed your conversation starter for that day!****

Academic Integrity

Most of your assignments will be submitted to canvas and run through TurnItIn, a plagiarism detection tool that also scans for AI-generated material. Your work **MUST** be 100% your own and written without the use of AI software (be careful, even editing software – i.e. Grammarly – can change your work enough to be flagged by TurnItIn). If you are found to have plagiarized or to have used AI to generate your work, you will receive a **ZERO** on the assignment for the first infraction and you will **FAIL** the class for the second infraction.

Zoom Option

This is a face-to-face course and as such most of your participation must be in-class. However, you may take a Zoom option ***ONCE*** during the semester as needed. You **must** communicate with me at least one hour prior to class if you will be joining via Zoom and you **must** still submit your 'conversation starter' assignment prior to the beginning of class. During your zoom session, you will also be required to post notes in the chat box to demonstrate that you are participating in class. You **cannot** use your zoom option to participate in your group presentation.

Course Schedule

- 1. Monday January 12th – Introduction to the Course: The Problems and Promises of PoMo!**

- 2. Wednesday January 14th – Theories and Concepts of Postmodernism – the Modernism in Postmodernism**

- Readings:** Irving Sandler, "Introduction," *Art of the Postmodern Era*

- 3. Monday January 19th – No Class – MLK Day Holiday**

4. Wednesday January 21st - Theories and Concepts of Postmodernism: Deconstruction! And other terms

Deadline to Sign Up for Group – Sign Up On Canvas

Readings: Irving Sandler, "Postmodernist Art Theory," *Art of the Postmodern Era*

5. Monday January 26th - Theories and Concepts of Postmodernism: Marginal to Mainstream

Readings: Irving Sandler, "The 'Other': From Marginal into the Mainstream," *Art of the Postmodern Era*; Jordana Moore Saggese, "Identity Politics: From the Margins to the Mainstream"

<https://smarthistory.org/identity-politics-from-the-margins-to-the-mainstream/>

6. Wednesday January 28th - Frameworks of Identity – Feminism

***Discussion Post #1 due Wednesday January 28th at 11:59pm AND Discussion Post #3: Response due Friday January 30th at 11:59pm

***Class 'Conversation Starter' #1: The Art Assignment's "Fierce Women of Art" Part 1 and 2, Clip from the Dick Cavett Show (1970s), PBS clips from the Series *Not Done: Women Making America*, "Awakenings," "Civil Rights," "Ladies Home Journal Sit In"

Readings: Selection from Laura Cottingham, "The Masculine Imperative: High Modern, Postmodern;" Hal Foster, "1975a," from *Art since 1900*

7. Monday February 2nd - Frameworks of Identity – Feminism

***Class 'Conversation Starter' #2: Tate, "Sonia Boyce, "Gathering a History of Black Women," TedTalks, "The Dangers of Western Feminism to African Women | Elma Akob," National Galleries, "Why are there so few female artists?"

Readings: Maxine Baca Zinn and Bonnie Thornton Dill, "Theorizing Multiracial Feminism"

8. Wednesday February 4th - Frameworks of Identity – Gay Liberation Movement

***Class 'Conversation Starter' #3: PBS American Experience clip, "Stonewall Uprising," History Channel clip from *Fight the Power: The Movements That Changed America*"

Readings: Conlan and Weinberg, "Introduction: Art After Stonewall, 1969-1989"

9. Monday February 9th- Frameworks of Identity – Gay Liberation Movement

***Class 'Conversation Starter' #4: Smarthistory, "Aids won't wait, the enemy is here not in Kuwait," History Channel, "LGBTQ+ Rights Movement and the AIDS Epidemic" + ABC7NY The Vault, "ACT UP protesters tie up traffic in lower Manhattan," National Gallery of London, "How did Lucian Freud present queer and marginalized bodies?," Smarthistory, "Masami Teraoka, *American Kabuki*"

Readings: "AIDS and Activism;" Solomon, "AIDS and Politics;" Hal Foster, "1987," from *Art since 1900*

10. Wednesday February 11th- Frameworks of Identity – Racial Politics

***Class 'Conversation Starter' #5: RetroReport, "How a 1968 Student Protest Fueled a Chicano Rights Movement," Trailer for *The Black Panthers: Vanguard of the Revolution*, Clip from *Black Power: A British Story of Resistance*, PBS POV, "American Revolutionary: Black Power"

Readings: bell hooks, "Postmodern Blackness;" hooks, "Introduction: Revolutionary Attitudes;" Hal Foster, "1993c," from *Art since 1900*

11. Monday February 16th- Frameworks of Identity – Racial Politics

Film Response Paper due at 11:59pm

***Class 'Conversation Starter' #6: Austin PBS, "Austin Revealed: Chicano Civil Rights "Role of Chicano Identity in Arts," A look at *Soul of a Nation: Art in the Age of Black Power* exhibition that was at the Brooklyn Museum, Ideastream Public Media, "Artist Wadsworth Jarrell's Book, "Africobra," Sets the Record Straight on Creating a Black Aesthetic"

Readings: Tobias Wofford, "Afrofutures: Africa and the Aesthetics of Black Revolution"

12. Wednesday February 18– Frameworks of Identity – Postcolonialism

***Class 'Conversation Starter' #7: DW Documentary, "Postcolonial Europe: The significance of memory" and read the Tate's definition of Postcolonial Art = <https://www.tate.org.uk/art/art-terms/p/postcolonial-art>

Readings: Robert Young, "Montage," and "Hybridity," from *Postcolonialism A Very Short Introduction*

13. Monday February 23rd- Frameworks of Identity – Postcolonialism

***Class 'Conversation Starter' #8: Tate, "Zineb Sedira – 'The Personal is Political,'" Smarthistory, "What's in a map? Jaune Quick to See Smith's *State Names*," Tate, "The Black Atlantic: What is the Black Atlantic?"

Readings: Hal Foster, "1989," from *Art since 1900*; David Joselit, "1997," from *Art since 1900*

14. Wednesday February 25th- Modes of Communication – Conceptual Art

***Class 'Conversation Starter' #9: the Art Assignment, "The Case for Conceptual Art," Smarthistory, "John Baldessari, *I Will Not Make Any More Boring Art*"

Readings: Paul Wood, "Approaching Conceptual Art" + "Art as Idea;" Benjamin Buchloh, "1968b," from *Art since 1900*

15. Monday March 2nd - Modes of Communication – PoMo Painting and Craft

***Class 'Conversation Starter' #10: Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco: Faith Ringgold's American Story," The University of Chicago, "Leon Golub: Process," "Audrey Flack: Photorealism and Vanitas"

Readings: Sandler, "New Image Painting, *Art of the Postmodern Era* + Sandler, "American Neoexpressionism," *Art of the Postmodern Era*

16. Wednesday March 4th- Group One Presentation! Conceptual Art and PoMo Painting/Craft

***Discussion Post #2 due Wednesday March 4th at 11:59pm AND Discussion Post #2: Response due Friday March 6th at 11:59pm

17. Monday March 9th- No Class! – Enjoy your Spring Break

18. Wednesday March 11th – No Class! - Enjoy your Spring Break

19. Monday March 16th- Modes of Communication – Performance Art

***Class 'Conversation Starter' #11: The Art Assignment, "The Case for Performance Art," Tate, "Why Dance in a Museum?"

Readings: Selections from RoseLee Goldberg's *Performance Art: Live Art since the 60s*

20. Wednesday March 18th – Modes of Communication – Performance Art

***Class 'Conversation Starter' #12: "Mierle Laderman Ukeles, *Washing/Tracks/Maintenance: Outside* (July 23, 1973)," Tate, "Can My Body Be Art?," Tate, "Performance and Protest"

Readings: Hal Foster, "1974," from *Art since 1900*

21. Monday March 23rd – Group Two Presentation! Performance Art

22. Wednesday March 25th - Free Day to Attend the Exhibition – No Class

Exhibition Response Due at 11:59pm

23. Monday March 30th– Modes of Communication – Land Art and Site-Specificity

***Class 'Conversation Starter' #13: The Art Assignment, "The Case for Land Art

Readings: Brian Wallis, "Survey," from *Land Art*

24. Wednesday April 1st– Modes of Communication – Land Art and Site-Specificity

Sign Up for Artist for Artist Response Paper

***Class 'Conversation Starter' #14: Smarthistory, "Alice Aycock, Low Building with Dirt Roof (For Mary)," MoMa, "How Ana Mendieta's work reestablishes a connection with the Earth," Smarthistory, "Robert Smithson's Spiral Jetty"

Readings: Selections from *Groundswell: Women of Land Art*

25. Monday April 6th - Group Three Presentation! Land Art and Site-Specificity

26. Wednesday April 8th - Modes of Communication – PoMo Sculpture

***Class 'Conversation Starter' #15: The Art Assignment's "The Case for Minimalism," Smarthistory, "The Last Work of Eva Hesse," The Museum of Modern Art, "Richard Serra, Intersections II"

Readings: Hal Foster, "1966b," from *Art since 1900*; Hal Foster, "1969," from *Art since 1900*

27. Monday April 13th – Modes of Communication – Installation Art

***Class 'Conversation Starter' #16: Tate, "Yayoi Kusama: Obsessed with Polka Dots," NPR, "Yayoi Kusama: Infinity Mirrors;" Tate, "Yayoi Kusama: Obliteration Room"

Readings: Anne Peterson, "Installation as Shaped Space," from *Installation Art: between image and stage*

28. Wednesday April 15th- Group Four Presentation! Installation Art and PoMo Sculpture

***Discussion Post #3 due Wednesday April 15th at 11:59pm AND Discussion Post #1: Response due Friday April 17th at 11:59pm

29. Monday April 20th- Modes of Communication – PoMo Photography

***Class 'Conversation Starter' #17: The Art Assignment's "The Case for Copying," Smarthistory, "Carrie Mae Weems, Untitled (Woman Feeding Bird)"

Readings: Rosalind Krauss, "1977a," from *Art since 1900*; Hal Foster, "1980," from *Art since 1900*

30. Wednesday April 22nd- Modes of Communication – Video Art

***Class 'Conversation Starter' #18: The Art Assignment's "The Case for Video Art"

Readings: Rosalind Krauss and Hal Foster, "1998," from *Art since 1900*; Hal Foster, "1973," from *Art since 1900*; Margot Lovejoy, "Art, Technology, and Postmodernism" from *Art Journal*

31. Monday April 27th – Group Five Presentation! PoMo Photography and Video Art

32. Wednesday April 29th – Presentation Day!

Artist Response Due at 11:59pm

33. Monday May 4th – Finals Week - No In-Person Class

34. Wednesday May 6th – Finals Week - No In-Person Class

Summary of Course Deadlines:

Discussion Posts:

Discussion Post #1 – Wednesday Jan 28th at 11:59pm (Response Due Friday Jan 30th at 11:59pm)

Discussion Post #2 – Wednesday March 4th at 11:59pm (Response Due Friday March 6th at 11:59pm)

Discussion Post #3 – Wednesday April 15th at 11:59pm (Response Due Friday April 17th at 11:59pm)

Response Papers:

Film Response Paper Due February 16th at 11:59pm

Exhibition Response Paper Due March 25th at 11:59pm

Artist Response Paper Due April 29th at 11:59pm

Artist Response Paper Presentation due April 29th at 5pm

Group Presentations:

Group One: Wednesday March 4th in class

Group Two: Monday March 23rd in class

Group Three: Monday April 6th in class

Group Four: Wednesday April 15th in class

Group Five: Monday April 27th in class

*****The instructor reserves the right to alter this schedule with clear and timely notification.**

Course Disclaimer

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.

Academic Integrity Standards and Consequences

According to UNT Policy 06.003, Student Academic Integrity, academic dishonesty occurs when students engage in behaviors including, but not limited to cheating, fabrication, facilitating academic dishonesty, forgery, plagiarism, and sabotage. A finding of academic dishonesty may result in a range of academic penalties or sanctions ranging from admonition to expulsion from the University. [Insert specific sanction or academic penalty for specific academic integrity violation].

The "unauthorized" use of any person or technology that assists in a student's assignment, project, or paper is considered cheating under the UNT Student Academic Integrity Policy (UNT Policy 6.003). Unless a professor or instructor gives explicit "authorization," AI cannot be used to complete assignments, projects, or papers. Doing so will result in a "cheating" violation. AI should not be used to assist in writing papers, searching for sources, or creating citations. Citations provided by AI are fabricated by mimicking existing bodies of work. In most cases, AI will pull direct quotes from existing sources to answer queries and make-up information about the source. AI can be used ethically to help you develop an outline for a paper, generate ideas, and learn a citation style.

ADA Accommodation Statement

UNT makes reasonable academic accommodation for students with disabilities. Students seeking accommodation must first register with the Office of Disability Accommodation (ODA) to verify their eligibility. If a disability is verified, the ODA will provide a student with an accommodation letter to be delivered to faculty to begin a private discussion regarding one's specific course needs. Students may request accommodations at any time, however, ODA notices of accommodation should be provided as early as possible in the semester to avoid any delay in implementation. Note that students must obtain a new letter of accommodation for every semester and must meet with each faculty member prior to implementation in each class. For additional information see the ODA website at disability.unt.edu

Emergency Notification & Procedures

UNT uses a system called Eagle Alert to quickly notify students with critical information in the event of an emergency (i.e., severe weather, campus closing, and health and public safety emergencies like chemical spills, fires, or violence). In the event of a university closure, please refer to Canvas for contingency plans for covering course materials.

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 Dean of Students 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 deanofstudents.unt.edu/conduct.

The Use of Artificial Intelligence

In this course, I want you to engage deeply with the materials and develop your own critical thinking and writing skills. For this reason, the use of Generative AI (GenAI) tools like [Claude, ChatGPT, and Gemini, even Grammarly to a certain extent] is not permitted. While these tools can be helpful in some contexts, they do not align with our goal of fostering the development of your independent thinking. Using GenAI to complete any part of an assignment, exam, or coursework will be considered a violation of academic integrity, as it prevents the development of your own skills, and will be addressed according to the Student Academic Integrity policy.