

Chicago Political Art - 2014 - The Newberry Library

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Starting with the 1906 publication of *The Jungle* by Upton Sinclair (held in the Newberry in Case 4A 362 Special Collections 4th floor), this seminar will look at how Chicago was established as a site for artists to use their tools to advocate for social and political transformation. The intersection of arts and crafts with early social work at Hull House will be traced through the African-American and Latino community muralists of the 1960s and 70s. More recent events such as Sculpture Chicago's 1993 outdoor expo Culture in Action will be explored alongside of more activist public art like Department of Space and Land Reclamation in 2001.

This course will address many artists (Ellen Gates Starr, Upton Sinclair, John T. McCutcheon, The Dill Pickle Club, Gwendolyn Brooks) that draw from reproduced materials or selections from the Newberry Library Core, Special Collections, and online exhibitions. Additionally, the students will be exposed to ephemera and publications related to more recent (1960s-Present) artists drawn together in the instructor's newly organized "Chicago Ephemera Archives" (never-the-same.org). Through a fellowship at the Gray Center for Arts and Inquiry at the University of Chicago, the *Never The Same* archive is being developed to document local political art since the 1960s. These materials will be made available to the students to provide hands-on connection with the source-material and printed matter related to these practices.

The artists and events covered in this seminar tell the story of the city, as well as the evolution of different aesthetic and artistic strategies and social movements. African-American migration to Chicago will be addressed through discussing early Jazz and the later Black Arts Movement. European and Latino history in the United States will be explored by the organizations and cultural forms associated with those waves of migration. Contemporary social issues like the environment, gang violence and the fragmentation of community will be considered through artists exploring those themes in activist art, street exhibitions, and documentaries.

Each week the course will include a discussion of the readings led by students and facilitated by the instructor. As a supplement to discussion, the instructor will provide a slide show or screening related to the theme/time period.

At the last meeting, students will be asked to do a short "show-n-tell" presentation about one of the lesser-known art works or projects mentioned in the course or connections between the course materials and their ongoing work.

Drawing from the instructor's extensive background researching these subjects, this 6-week course will provide a solid grounding in the themes, events and significant figures in this broad history for any

student with an eagerness to learn.

6 Week Syllabus

Week 1 - Introduction - The 20th Century Emerges: Bohemias and Migrations

Read:

1. *Art at Hull House, 1889-1901: Jane Addams and Ellen Gates Starr* by Mary Ann Stankiewicz (Woman's Art Journal, P35-39 Vol. 10, No. 1, Spring - Summer, 1989)
2. The Little Review - Early Years and Avant Garde Ideas by Susan Noyes Platt in Sue Ann Prince, ed, *The Old Guard and the Avant-Garde, Modernism in Chicago 1910- 1940*, University of Chicago Press, 1990
3. "Chapter 2: We were part of them" and "Chapter 3: Washed Up on a Favorable Shore" from *The Third Coast: When Chicago Built the American Dream* by Dyja, Thomas

Discuss: Jane Addams and Ellen Gates Starr, Hull House, John Ruskin, William Morris, Florence Kelley, Upton Sinclair, Frank Harris, Floyd Dell, Loreda Taft, Margaret Anderson, The Little Review, Louis Armstrong, Dil Pickle Club, Carl Hoekner, Harry Gottlieb, John Conroy, Nelson Algren, Carl Sandberg, Studs Terkel, Richard Wright, The Chicago John Reed Club, Illinois Writers Project and Works Progress Administration, American Artists Congress, Katherine Dunham, Sir Francis Drake, Abraham Lincoln Center, Interracial Southside Cultural Conference, Gwendolyn Brooks, Edna Wolff Henner, Charles Seabee, South Side Community Art Center, American Negro Exposition, Unity of Science Movement, John Dewey, Mies van der Rohe, Laszlo Moholy-Nagy.

Week 2 - Post-War to early 1960s

Read:

1. Chapter 4: Founding The Collective (P85-114) from *A Power Stronger Than Itself: The AACM and American Experimental Music* by George Lewis (University of Chicago Press, 2008)
2. "Anticultural Positions," by Jean Dubuffet – a lecture delivered at the Arts Club of Chicago in 1951, staking out an "anti-civilized" position that had an influence on many Chicago artists at mid-century
3. p1-22 of "To be revolutionary in everything: The Rebel Worker Story, 1964-1968" by Franklin Rosemont from "Dancin in the Streets! Anarchists, IWWs, Surrealists, Situationists, and Provos as recorded in the pages of the Rebel Worker and Heatwave" edited by Rosemont and Radcliffe (Charles H Kerr press, 2005)

Discuss: Grace Lee Boggs, Margaret Burroughs, Bill V. Mullen, Jean Dubuffet, Leon Golub, Nancy Spero, Monster Roster, The Hairy Who, Chicago Imagists, International Workers of the World, Ron

Sokalsky, Heat Wave, The Rebel Worker, Big Table Magazine, Haki R. Madhubuti, The Poetry Center, Anthony Braxton, Roscoe Mitchell, Phil Cohran.

Week 3 - The late 60s and 1970s

Read:

1. *Art & Soul: An Experimental Friendship between the Street and a Museum* by Rebecca Zorach (Art Journal Vol 70, No 2, Summer 2011)
2. Interviews with Dominick Di Meo, Richard Gray, Ellen Lanyon, Robert Sengstacke (p32-49) from 1968: Art and Politics in Chicago (DePaul University Art Museum)
3. "Earth Music" by Anthony Braxton. Republished in "Dancin in the Streets!" (Charles H Kerr press, 2005)
4. Chapter 3. The MARCH Years (1971-79) from *Bringing Aztlán to Mexican Chicago: My Life, My Work, My Art* by Jose Gamaliel Gonzalez, Marc Zimmerman (University of Illinois Press, 2010)
5. Re-Copying-IT-RIGHT AGAIN by jonCates (Unpublished)

Discuss: Organization of Black American Culture, Wall of Respect, William Walker, Chicago Public Art Group, John Pittman Webber, Third World Press, AfriCOBRA, Barbara Jones-Hogu, Affro Arts Theater, Pemon Rami, Art and Soul, Anne Zelle, American Revolution 2, The Film Group, The Young Patriots Organization, The Illinois Black Panther Party, Democratic National Convention, Barton Silverman, Tom Palazzolo, Claes Oldenburg, Richard Feigen gallery, Chicago Artists for Peace in Vietnam, Chicago Artist Boycott, Chicago Women's Graphics Collective, The Chicago Surrealist Group, Franklin and Penelope Rosemont, World Surrealist Exhibition, Gallery Black Swan, Rising Up Angry, The Rainbow Coalition, Kartemquin, Ray Patlán, Phil Morton, Jane Veeder, Dan Sandin, Joy Poe, Artemesia Gallery, El Movimiento Artístico Chicano (MARCH).

Week 4 - 1980s and early 1990s

Read:

1. Chicago And Feminism - An uneasy Alliance (New Art Examiner, October 1983)
2. Judith Russi Kirshner/Barbara Randolph/David Hemmings: Madhousers at Randolph Street Gallery's Counter-proposals [source: excerpts from special issue of *Artpapers*, 1992]
3. Pablo Helguera's *The Jailer's Tale: A personal recounting of The Couple in the Cage* (Unpublished)
4. Mary Jane Jacob: Interview from <http://never-the-same.org/interviews/mary-jane-jacob/>

Discuss: New Art Examiner, Randolph Street Gallery, Hyde Park Art Center, Regan Upshaw, Arc

Gallery, N.A.M.E, Chicago Artists Coalition, Conference on Alternative Spaces, Art Not Arms, Chris Millon, Unforgettable Fire, Peace Museum, Jack Burnham, Richard Daley, Kay Rosen, Bill Stamets, Harold Washington, Chicago Council on Fine Arts, Women in the Director's Chair, Vietnam Veterans Art Group, National Veterans Art Museum, Crossroads Fund, Trixter, Casper, Rapid Enamel: The Art of Graffiti, Renaissance Society, Roberto Valdez, William Upsky Wimsatt, The Warehouse, Frankie Knuckles, Christina Tillman, Joe Losurdo, Jos Crudos, Ono, Travis, Doug Ischar, Artists Call Against US Intervention in Central America, Axe Street Arena, Dia De Los Muertos, Mi Raza Arts Consortium (MIRA), Goat Island, Theater Oobleck, Neofuturists, Oscar Brown Jr., About Face Theater, Pntig, Storycatchers, ETA, Dan Peterman, David Nelson, Dread Scott, Sister Serpent, Jeremy Turner, Mary Ellen Croteau, Critical Messages, Joan Jett Blakk, Act Up Chicago, Calles Y Suenos, NNWAC, Elizam Escobar, Homocore, Spew: The Homographic Convergence, Active Resistance, Guillermo Gómez -Peña and Coco Fusco, Culture in Action, HaHa, Mark Dion, Daniel J. Martinez, Suzanne Lacy, Iñigo Manglano-Ovalle, Madhousers.

Week 5 - Late 1990s and Early 2000s

Read:

1. Kerry James Marshall: Agent of Change by Dan S. Wang (New Art Examiner, 2001)
2. Struggles at Haymarket by Nicolas Lampert in Josh MacPhee and Erik Reuland, eds., *Realizing the Impossible: Art Against Authority* (AK Press, 2007)
3. Trashing the Neoliberal City; Edited by Daniel Tucker and Emily Forman (Learning Site, 2007)

Discuss: Kerry James Marshall, The Department of Space and Land Reclamation, Community Media Workshop, Insight Arts, Video Machete, Street Level Youth Media, Beyondmedia Education, Chitown Lowdown, University of Hip Hop, Kuumba Lynx, Free Spirit Media, Co-op Image Group, Temporary Services, Polvo, Uncomfortable Spaces, Laurie Palmer, 3 Acres on the Lake, Ladyfest Midwest Chicago, Haymarket Centennial Mail Art Show, Sarah Kanouse, Michael Piazza, Haymarket 8 Hour Action Series, Pocket Guide To Hell, Butcher Shop, Dogmatic Gallery, Pioneer Renewal Trust, Pink Bloque, Pilot TV.

Week 6 - The Present

Read:

1. *Theaster Gates: Radical Reform with Everyday Tools* by Hesse McGraw (Afterall, Summer 2012)
2. Carol Becker's Introduction to *Shoot an Iraqi* by Bilal/Lydersen (City Lights, 2008)
3. *Information's Metropolis Chicago and the New Nature of Global Finance* by Brian Holmes (Unpublished)

Discussion: Seminar Participant Presentations