

Course Outline KULIS

Course title	“From Transindividualism to the Pluriverse: Concepts of Relationality in Contemporary Art and Theory”.
Date/duration	tba
Lecturer	Prof. Dr. Elisabeth Fritz (Institute of History and Theory of Art)
Teaching language	English
ECTS	SV + L (3 + 2 CP)

Contents

The concept of relationality is omnipresent in contemporary aesthetic, philosophical, anthropological and sociological theory as well as artistic practice. These discourses range from "matters of care" (Puig de la Bellacasa), "dividuation" (Ott) and the "transindividual" (Balibar, Vujanović/Cvejić), to larger political models such as the "declaration of interdependence" (Convivialist Manifesto) or the "pluriverse" (Escobar). Despite their differences, these theories are united by the idea of transgressing the concept of clearly distinguishable individual entities, and the premise of the unavoidable human and non-human condition of being in relation to others. Furthermore, the relational often forms the basis for theories and criticism of participatory art forms (Bourriaud, Bishop) as well as for postcolonial theory (Glissant) or posthumanist and eco-critical thinking (Haraway, Lowenhaupt Tsing). While engaging with these positions and their different conceptions of relationality, we will particularly consider the positive, negative or ambivalent associations attributed to the category of the relational and its historical genesis in traditional philosophy and art. We will also examine selected artistic positions that explicitly and visually proclaim relationality for their work (e.g. Ei Arakawa, Nikima Jagudajev, Otobong Nkanga, Emeka Ogboh, Alexandra Pirici, Koki Tanaka, and others).

Learning outcomes

On this course, you will learn to distinguish between key concepts and discourses of relationality within contemporary art and theory. We will practice reading and engaging with various texts in a critical manner, as well as understanding them within today's broader socio-political and cultural context. You will also be trained to relate these texts to historical questions in aesthetics and social theory, and test their application to concrete examples of contemporary art.

Teaching and learning methods

Course type: SV + L Vertiefende/ausgewählte Fragen der Kunstwissenschaft (BA)
(= Lecture and Reading Course: Advanced/Selected Topics in Art History for B.A. students)
This course will be characterized by a combination of lectures, student contributions, and interactive elements. The critical analysis and discussion of selected texts, as well as the analysis and interpretation of contemporary artworks, will be a central focus.

Course preparation

Any prior knowledge of contemporary art theory and practice will be helpful to attend this course, but there is no special preparation necessary to be able to participate. However, if you would like to read up on some of the topics we will discuss in advance, please feel free to select any titles from the selected bibliography below.

Additional literature

Selected Bibliography:

- Balibar, Étienne: Spinoza, the Transindividual, Edinburgh 2020
- Bishop, Claire: Artificial Hells. Participatory Art and the Politics of Spectatorship, London/New York 2012
- Bourriaud, Nicolas: Relational Aesthetics, Dijon 2002
- Convivialist Manifesto. A declaration of interdependence, Duisburg 2014
- Escobar, Arturo: Designs for the Pluriverse. Radical Interdependence, Autonomy, and the Making of Worlds, Durham/NC 2018
- Glissant, Édouard: Poetics of Relation, Ann Arbor/MI 1997
- Haraway, Donna J.: Staying with the Trouble. Making Kin in the Chthulucene, Durham/NC 2016
- Lowenhaupt Tsing, Anna: The Mushroom at the End of the World, Princeton/NJ 2015
- Ott, Michaela: Dividuations. Theories of Participation, London 2018
- Puig de la Bellacasa, Maria: Matters of Care. Speculative Ethics in More than Human Worlds, Minneapolis/MN 2017
- Vujanović, Ana /Cvejić, Bojana: Toward a Transindividual Self. A study in social dramaturgy, Oslo/Brussels/Zagreb 2022

Assessment (%)

(methods of examination, requirements for awarding credit points)

As part of your own contributions to class sessions (presentations, group work, etc.), you may complete portions of the course assessment already during the semester. Further details regarding the detailed programme of the course, the requirement for awarding credit points and the methods of examination will be announced at the beginning of the semester.

Contact details (lecturer)

Prof. Dr. phil. Elisabeth Fritz
Institute of History and Theory of Art
Catholic Private University Linz
A-4020 Linz, Bethlehemstraße 20
T: +43 517 85 4191
E: e.fritz@ku-linz.at
https://ku-linz.at/en/art_history