Nordic Contemporary Art

Semester and Year: Fall and Spring  
Semester/Year This Course Starts: Fall 2016  
Location: Stockholm  
Home academic program: European Humanities  
Credits: 3  
Major Disciplines: Art History, Visual Arts  
Time: Mondays & Thursdays, 13:15 – 14:35  
Faculty: Vendela Grundell

Vendela Grundell. PhD in Art History, Department of Culture and Aesthetics at Stockholm University 2016. MA in Aesthetical Disciplines 2011 and BA in Cultural Studies 2007 at Stockholm University. Art professional, photographer and writer since 2000.

Description of course:
This course focuses on the dynamics of regional identity in art, art history, and curating. We depart from the city and art scene of Stockholm that surrounds us to analyze artworks, exhibitions and texts: What is contemporary – and what is Nordic – about the art and issues that surface here?

Contemporary art has been subject to globalization processes since the 1980s. A focus on identity politics – for instance feminist, postcolonial, and queer perspectives – came to include concerns about the shared public spaces and markets of global art. In the Nordic countries, new encounters reached for art scenes in continental Europe and the US, yet also importantly turned attention to a regional identity. Discourses and arenas for artistic practices and poetics develop in relation to similarities and differences between regions.

Field Studies:
- Stockholm Metro Art  
- Moderna Museet

Learning objectives of the course:
- To gain knowledge of the primary manifestations of Nordic Contemporary Art  
- To acquire the ability to formally analyze and discuss specific art works and related historical and cultural parameters  
- To enable students to critically evaluate the contexts of artistic practice, using the course focus  
- To utilize museums and art galleries in Stockholm as sites for experiential learning  
- To elaborate specific topics from the region in oral and written assignments

Course Requirements:
Attendance and active participation in class discussions and during museum visits, including oral presentation. Written assignments; exhibition review, research paper (in accordance with Writing Papers at DIS), test. To be eligible for a passing grade in this class you must complete all of the assigned work.

This syllabus is subject to change.
Course Evaluation:

- Research paper (9-10 pages)  30%
- In class test  25%
- Exhibition review (4 pages)  15%
- Oral presentation in class  10%
- Active class participation  10%
- In class essay  10%

Course Format:
We will meet for 23 sessions throughout the semester. The sessions will be a mixture of class discussions, student presentations, and lectures. Field studies to significant museums and contemporary exhibitions in the Stockholm area form an essential part of this course. The visits require active student participation (e.g. student presentations and group work).

Required Reading:


Course Schedule

Assignment details and guidelines will be clarified during the course sessions
Assigned pages per session include images discussed in the literature

Session 1
Thursday, August 25 – Course Introduction


Session 2
Monday, August 29 – Contemporary Art
Kalb: 10-17 (ca 5 p)
Karlholm: 188-193 (ca 5 p)
Sturken & Cartwright: 307-327 (ca 18 p)

Session 3
Thursday, September 1 – The Nordic Context I: Art Institutions and Discourse

Session 4
Monday, September 5 – The Nordic Context II: Artist’s Voices and Spaces
Amirsadeghi: 47, 195-197, 221, 249, 314-317, 332 (ca 2 p)
Dagliden: 4, 27-29 (ca 3 p)

Additional reading before the in-class essay: Sturken & Cartwright: 9-15, 26-35, 49-52, 72-82 (ca 28 p)

Session 5
Thursday, September 8 – In-class Essay + Block Roundup

Core Course Week
Monday, September 12 – Saturday, September 17

BLOCK 2: ART AND THE CITY – LOCATIONS, DISPLAYS, SITUATIONS

Session 6
Monday, September 19 – Block Introduction
Birnbaum & Nilsson: 37-59, 105-127 (ca 18 p)
Sturken & Cartwright: 337-343, 93-111 (ca 18 p)

This syllabus is subject to change.
Field Study
Wednesday, September 21 13:00 -17:00
Exploring the city through its largest ongoing art exhibition – the Stockholm Metro

Session 7
Thursday, September 22 – Public Art, People’s Art
Sturken & Cartwright: 36-46 (ca 7 p)

Session 8
Wednesday, September 28 15:40 – 17:00 – Creating Situations: Media Flows and Performance
Sturken & Cartwright: 174-180, 212-220, 247-255 (ca 18 p)

Session 9
Thursday, September 29 – Creating Space: Sculpture, Installation, and Architecture
Sturken & Cartwright: 82-89, 236-242 (ca 11 p)

Session 10
Monday, October 3 – Oral presentations (first option)

Session 11
Thursday, October 6 – Block Roundup

Long Study Tour/Break
Saturday, October 8th – Sunday, October 16

BLOCK 3: MID-SEMESTER TUNE-IN

Session 12
Monday, October 17 – Recap and Test Preparation

Session 13
Thursday, October 20 – In-class Test

Session 14
Monday, October 24 – Guest lecture: Artist Anna Sörenson
Artist Residencies and Collaborations in and beyond a Nordic Contemporary Art Context

Session 15
Thursday, October 27 – Block Roundup

This syllabus is subject to change.
Long Study Tour/ Break  
Saturday, October 29 – Sunday, November 6

BLOCK 4: MEDIA – MATERIALS, MIXING, INTERACTION

Session 16  
Monday, November 7 – Block Introduction  
Sturken & Cartwright: 183-185, 223-224, 229-233, 242-247 (ca 11 p)

Session 17  
Thursday, November 10 – Painting and Photography  
Höglund et al: 9-37 (ca 10 p)  
Sturken & Cartwright: 16-22, 111-120, 141-143, 161-174, 190-203 (ca 31 p)

Session 18  
Monday, November 14 – Moving Images  
Sturken & Cartwright: 185-190, 224-229, 255-260 (ca 11 p)

Field Study  
Wednesday, November 16 08:30 -12:30  
Moderna Museet  
Amirsadeghi: 72, 269-270, 272, 283 (ca 5 p)

Session 19  
Thursday, November 17 – Oral Presentations (second option)

Session 20  
Monday, November 21 – Block Roundup

Travel Break  
Wednesday, November 23 – Sunday, November 27

BLOCK 5: CONCLUSIONS & NEW DIRECTIONS

Session 21  
Monday, November 28 – Nordic Contemporary Art: Again, and Anew

This syllabus is subject to change.
**Session 22**
Thursday, December 1 – Guest Lecture (TBA)

**Session 23**
Monday, December 5 – Block Roundup and Course Feedback

**Final paper and exhibition review due on Friday, December 9**

**Grades will be registered in early January**