Twentieth-Century and Contemporary Art in Latin America

FA 77b, Professor Lori Cole, Tu/Thu 3:30-4:50 pm
Mandel Center for the Humanities, 206; Office hours Tu/Th 2-3 pm
Email: lcole@brandeis.edu

Joaquín Torres-García, *Mapa invertido (Upside-Down Map)*, 1943

This course will provide an overview of Latin American art history, starting with modernists such as Diego Rivera, Frida Kahlo, Joaquín Torres García, Xul Solar, and Wifredo Lam, through contemporary artists ranging from Hélio Oiticica and Lygia Clark to Doris Salcedo and Alfredo Jaar. We will consider the diversity of Latin American cultural production, looking in particular at artists’ relationship to race, gender, revolutionary upheaval, and a colonial past; along with the incorporation or rejection of European avant-garde strategies. The goal of this class is to introduce you to Latin American art practice and scholarship and at the same time to help you to develop a critical understanding of the historical specificity of these movements, their relation to definitions of modern and contemporary art, and their relevance to issues of nationalism, colonialism, urbanism and globalization. The readings are both primary documents (i.e. artist’s statements) and secondary interpretative texts by scholars such as Mari Carmen Ramírez, Gerardo Mosquera, Jacqueline Barnitz, Dawn Ades. You will also be engaging with Latin American art housed in the Rose Art Museum’s collection and on view in the Boston area. We will consider a wide variety of Latin American artistic production—photography, sculpture, prints, painting, manifestos, magazines, performances, exhibitions and ephemera from across the twentieth century—with an eye to the technologies and global changes that inspired them to determine how this artwork defined, challenged, or helped shape Latin American history.
Course requirements:

This course aims to sharpen your written and analytic skills as you learn to write and speak critically about Latin American art history. Formal papers and presentations will be supplemented by in-class writing and discussion of the readings and images we consider each week. You will be expected to prepare all of the readings in advance and be an active participant in class discussion.

- **Comparative Analysis.** There are three short (2-3 page) comparative papers required on course readings and images.
- **Art Criticism.** A 300-word review of a Latin American art exhibition in the Boston area.
- **Summary of an art event.** You are required to attend an event either on or off campus during the semester, which could be an artist talk or other arts related lecture and write a one-page summary of the event.
- **Final paper.** An 8-10 page paper using at least two images and two readings on a topic of your choice (to be determined in consultation with the professor).
- **Final presentation.** Present your final paper to the class (5 minutes).

Evaluation:

- Participation and Attendance: 15%
- Short Papers: 45% (each 15%)
- Art Criticism: 10%
- Final Paper: 20%
- Final Presentation: 10%

Your grade for this class will consider the progress you show in your work throughout the semester.

Course Materials:

All other course readings are posted on LATTE. You must print out all work in advance of class and bring it to you. Please do not read work on laptops or iPads.

Readings: The readings must be completed before the course meeting. You will be expected to arrive at all course meetings prepared to be an active, thoughtful participant in discussions.

Assignments: All papers are to be handed in both as a hard copy and electronically to lcole@brandeis.edu

Late policy: Papers will be lowered 1/3 grade for each day after the due date that the paper is late; no paper will be accepted past one week after the assignment was due.

Attendance and Tardiness: You are expected to attend every class and arrive on time. You are allowed three absences during the semester, and additional absences will seriously affect your grade. Attendance will be taken at each session and three late arrivals will be counted as an absence. If you are going to miss class, please contact me ahead of time.
**Classroom Etiquette:** This classroom must be a place of mutual respect where every student feels comfortable expressing his or her thoughts. Please make sure to turn off cell phones before class and use laptops sparingly.

**Assistance:** The Writing Center is open M-F 10:30 am-6 pm at Goldfarb Main Library, Room 107: [http://www.brandeis.edu/writingprogram/writingcenter/index.html](http://www.brandeis.edu/writingprogram/writingcenter/index.html)

**Disabilities:** If you are a student with a documented disability on record at Brandeis University and wish to have a reasonable accommodation made for you in this class, please see me immediately.

**Academic Integrity:** You are expected to be familiar with and to follow the University’s policies on academic integrity (see [http://www.brandeis.edu/studentlife/sdc/ai](http://www.brandeis.edu/studentlife/sdc/ai)).

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**What is Latin America?**

**Tuesday, January 14th:** Introduction

Go over key terms; introduce artists and concepts to be considered in the class.

**Thursday, January 16th:** Modernity in Latin America


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**Mexican Modernism**

**Tuesday, January 21st:** Muralism

Siqueiros, “Three Appeals for a Modern Direction to the New Generation of American Painters and Sculptors”

Leon Trotsky, André Breton, and Diego Rivera, “For An Independent Revolutionary Art”

J.C. Orozco, "New World, New Races and New Art"


**Thursday, January 23rd:** Graphic Arts and Photography

Dawn Ades, “Posada and the Popular Graphic Tradition,” Art in Latin America: The Modern Era
“José Guadalupe Posada and the Taller Gráfica Popular: Mexican Popular Prints”

Ernesto Peñalosa Méndez, “Sun and Shadows in Mexican Photography: Manuel Álvarez Bravo, Águstin Jiménez, and Luis Márquez”

**Tuesday, January 28th: Women in Mexico**


**Art of the Caribbean**

**Thursday, January 30th: The Art of Cuba**

Manifesto of the Grupo Minorista (1927)

Martí Casanovas, “New Art” (1927)


**Tuesday, February 4th: Race and Negritude**


**Indigenism in Ecuador and Peru**

**Thursday, February 6th: Indigenismo**

José Carlos Mariátegui, “The Indigenous Question” in *the Heroic and Creative Meaning of*


*First short paper due.*

**Argentina, Uruguay, and Venezuela**

**Tuesday, February 11th:** Argentina and Venezuela

“Manifesto” *Martín Fierro* (1924)

Xul Solar, “Pettoruti and his Works,” “Pettoruti,” and “Emilio Pettoruti”

Armando Reverón, “Untitled Statements”


*Note: Thursday’s February 13th class is cancelled and there is no class the following week. In lieu of class, attend an arts event either on or off campus and write a one-page summary of the event.*

**Tuesday, February 25th:** Torres-García and the School of the South


Joaquín Torres-García, “The New Art of America” and “Art Evolution”


**Brazilian Modernism**

**Thursday, February 27th:** Semana de Arte and Anthropophagy

Oswald de Andrade, “Anthropophagite Manifesto” (1928) and “Manifesto Pau Brasil”


Concrete Art, Abstraction and Geometric Abstraction

Tuesday, March 4th: The 1950s in Brazil and Mexico

Luis Carlos Emerich, “La Ruptura: The Turning Point of the 1950s,” Latin American Art (Fall 1990): 70-75


Jacqueline Barnitz, Selections from “Concrete and Neoconcrete Art and their Offshoots in the Brazilian Context,” Twentieth Century Art of Latin America.

Thursday, March 6th: Geometric Abstraction

Gyula Kosice, “The Founding of Madi” and “Madi Manifesto”


Second short paper due.

Tuesday, March 11th: Visit the Rose Art Museum

Note: Class held at the Rose Art Museum to see Latin American works from its collection.

Thursday, March 13th: Kinectic and Op Art

“GRAV Manifesto: Transforming the Current Situation in Plastic Art”

Carlos Cruz-Diez, “Color and the History of Painting” and “Reflections on Color”

Jesús Rafael Soto, “Serialization” and “Artist’s Statement”

**Neoconcrete Art and Experience**

**Tuesday, March 18**: Neoconcrete Art and Tropicalia

Helio Oiticica, excerpts “Releasing Painting into Space,” and “General Scheme of the New Objectivity, section 3” (1967), Lygia Clark, “The Death of the Plane” (1960) and “We Refuse” (1966), reprinted in *Inverted Utopias* (MFA Houston, 2004), pp. 522-526.


*One-page event summary due.*

**Pop, Neofiguration and Conceptual Art**

**Thursday, March 20**: Neofigurative and Pop

Luis Felipe Noé, “Chaos as a Structure”

Marta Minjuín, “Destruction of my Work in the Impasse, Ronsin, France”

Jorge Glusberg, “Marta Minjuín: Time and Space in her Work”


**Tuesday, March 25**: Conceptual Art


**The 1980s and the Art of Resistance**

**Thursday, March 27**: Resisting Dictatorship


Shifra Goldman, “Dissidence and Resistance: Art in Chile Under the Dictatorship”

“Experiences 68,” “Interruptions” and “Tucamán is Burning: Statement of the Exhibition in Rosario” Listen, Here, Now! Argentine Art of the 1960s: Writings of the Avant-Garde

Third short paper due.

Contemporary Art: Case Studies

Tuesday, April 1st: Art and Trauma


Note: Class on Thursday, April 3rd has been cancelled. In lieu of class, attend an exhibition of Latin American art in the Boston area for your art criticism assignment.

Tuesday, April 8th: Photography

Nancy Sever, “Alfredo Jaar: From there to here,”


“Archives of the Fallen: Eugenio Dittborn, Milagros De La Torre, Rosângela Rennó and Charles Marewether,” Grand Street, No. 62, Identity (Fall, 1997), pp. 36-47

Thursday, April 10th: Contemporary Latin American art in Boston

Note: A curator will be speaking to the class about contemporary Latin American art.

Art Criticism due.

Note: The following week is spring break.

Towards a Conclusion

Thursday, April 24th: Postmodernism and Latin American Art


*Student Presentations*

**Tuesday, April 29th: Conclusions**

*Student Presentations*

*Final Paper due*