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THE CONSERVATION OF CONTEMPORARY ART  
MUSEUM OF CONTEMPORARY ART – UNIVERSITY OF SAO PAULO

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This five-day course is designed for students and professionals who are interested in the theory and practice of conserving contemporary art. Installation, media, and performance works will serve as case studies to analyze conservation concerns of contemporary art in the museum context. Students will learn about conservation processes as they assess challenges posed by acquiring, documenting, exhibiting, and conserving complex contemporary artworks in the museum. Examining these concerns will engage various contemporary debates around loss, authorship, intentionality, and authenticity. The course will include a combination of lectures, discussions, gallery visits, and an artist interview. Topics will include the following:

- The Museum Life of Contemporary Art
- The Contingent Conservation Object
- Acquiring and Documenting Contemporary Art
- Exhibiting Contemporary Art
- Working with Artists
- Installation Art
- Film, Media, & Software-Based Art
- Performance Art
- Contemporary Art & the Public
- Interviewing Artists

COURSE READINGS

Berkens, Lydia (et. al.) “Part I Guidelines: Practical Guide for the Artist Interview.” In *The Artist Interview: For Conservation and Presentation of Contemporary Art Guidelines and Practice*. Heÿningen: Jap Sam Books. 2012. 13-53.

Berndes, Christiane. “New Registration Models Suited to Modern and Contemporary Art.” In Hummelen, IJsbrand & Dionne Sillé (eds.) *Modern Art: Who Cares?* Amsterdam: The Foundation for the Conservation of Modern Art and the Netherlands Institute for Cultural Heritage. 1999.  
[http://www.sbmk.nl/uploads/introductie\\_tot\\_registratiemodellen.pdf](http://www.sbmk.nl/uploads/introductie_tot_registratiemodellen.pdf)

Beunan, Annemaire. “Moral Rights in Modern Art: An International Survey,” In Hummelen, IJsbrand & Dionne Sillé (eds.) *Modern Art: Who Cares?* Amsterdam: The Foundation for the Conservation of Modern Art and the Netherlands Institute for Cultural Heritage. 1999. 222-232.

Dietz, Steve. “Collecting New-Media Art: Just Like Anything Else, Only Different”. In Altshuler, Bruce (ed.) *Collecting the New: Museums and Contemporary Art*. Princeton: Princeton University Press. 2006. 85-101.

Guggenheim Museum. "Time-Based Media Conservation." <http://www.guggenheim.org/new-york/collections/conservation/time-based-media> (read the text on this website, especially *Establishing New Practices* and *Media Art Documentation*. Check out the *Iteration report*)

INCCA / Foundation for the Conservation of Modern Art. "The Decision-Making Model for the Conservation and Restoration of Modern and Contemporary Art." <https://ceroart.revues.org/3597>

Laurenson, Pip. "Authenticity, Change and Loss in the Conservation of Time-Based Media Installations" Autumn 2006. Tate Papers. 10 June 2007. <http://www.tate.org.uk/download/file/fid/7401>

Laurenson, Pip and Vivian van Saaze. "Collecting Performance-Based Art: New Challenges and Shifting Perspectives." In O. Remes (ed.) *Performativity in the Gallery: Staging Interactive Encounters*. Bern: Peter Lang. 2014. 27-41.

Wharton, Glenn. "The Challenges of Conserving Contemporary Art." In Altshuler, Bruce (ed.) *Collecting the New: Museums and Contemporary Art*. Princeton: Princeton University Press. 2006. 164-178.

Wharton, Glenn. "Public Access in the Age of Documented Art." *Revista de História da Arte*. Lisbon: Instituto de História da Arte. (In Press. March 2014)

#### ADDITIONAL BACKGROUND READING

Altshuler, Bruce (ed.) *Collecting the New: Museums and Contemporary Art*. Princeton: Princeton University Press. 2006

Beerkens, Lydia. (ed.) *The Artist Interview*. Heÿningen: Jap Sam Books. 2012

Buskirk, Martha. *The Contingent Object of Contemporary Art*. Cambridge, MA and London: MIT Press. 2003

Corzo, M.A. (ed.) *Mortality Immortality? The Legacy of 20th-Century Art*. Los Angeles: The Getty Conservation Institute. 1999

Engel, Deena & Glenn Wharton. "Reading Between the Lines: Source Code Documentation as a Conservation Strategy for Software-Based Art." *Studies in Conservation*. London: International Institute for the Conservation of Historic and Artistic Works. 2014. 59:6. 404-415.

Engel, Deena & Glenn Wharton. "Source Code Analysis as Technical Art History." *Journal of the American Institute for Conservation*. 2015. 54:2. 91-101.

Hummelen, IJsbrand & Dionne Sillé (eds.) *Modern Art: Who Cares?* Amsterdam: The Foundation for the Conservation of Modern Art and the Netherlands Institute for Cultural Heritage. 1999

Scholte, Tatja & Glenn. Wharton (eds.) *Inside Installations*. Amsterdam: University of Amsterdam Press. 2011

Wharton, Glenn. "Disrupted Circuits: Managing Nam June Paik Video Sculpture at the Museum of Modern Art." In *Nam June Paik Art Center Interviews*. Seoul: Nam Jun Paik Art Center. 2013. 150-169.

## RELEVANT ORGANIZATIONS / PROJECTS

Andrew W. Mellon Foundation Funded Open Source Collections Database Projects

ResearchSpace <http://www.researchspace.org/>

CollectionsSpace <http://www.collectionspace.org/>

ConservationSpace <http://conservationspace.org/Home.html>

DOCAM: Documentation and Conservation of Media Arts Heritage <http://www.docam.ca/>

Forging the Future <http://forging-the-future.net/>

Guggenheim Museum

Panza Collection Initiative <http://www.guggenheim.org/new-york/collections/about-the-collection/the-panza-collection-initiative>

Time-Based Media Conservation <http://www.guggenheim.org/new-york/collections/conservation/time-based-media>

Hirshhorn Museum

Artist Interview Program <http://hirshhorn.si.edu/collection/conservation/#detail=/bio/about-artist-interview-program/&collection=conservation>

Inside Installations <http://nimk.nl/inside-installations-theory-and-practice-in-the-care-of-complex-artwork>

International Network for the Conservation of Contemporary Art (INCCA) <http://www.incca.org/>

LIMA Preserving Digital Art <http://www.li-ma.nl/site/preservation>

Matters in Media Art <http://www.tate.org.uk/about/projects/matters-media-art>

Menil Collection: Artist Documentation Project (ADP) <http://adp.menil.org/>

San Francisco Museum of Modern Art

Artist Initiative [http://www.sfmoma.org/about/press/press\\_news/releases/983](http://www.sfmoma.org/about/press/press_news/releases/983)

Rauschenberg Research Project

[http://www.sfmoma.org/about/research\\_projects/research\\_projects\\_rauschenberg](http://www.sfmoma.org/about/research_projects/research_projects_rauschenberg)

Smithsonian Institution

Time-Based Media Conservation <http://www.si.edu/tbma/about>

Tate

Collecting the Performative <http://www.tate.org.uk/about/projects/collecting-performative>

Time-Based Media Conservation <http://www.tate.org.uk/about/our-work/conservation/time-based-media>

Voices in Contemporary Art <http://www.voca.network/>

Walker Art Center

Living Collections Catalog <http://www.walkerart.org/press/browse/press-releases/2014/walker-art-center-launches-new-online-collect>

## COURSE SCHEDULE

### Monday August 3

#### Session Topics:

Course Introduction  
Art Conservation & Collections Management  
Conservation Research & Intervention  
Dematerialization & Object Contingency in Contemporary Art  
The Museum Life of Contemporary Art part 1

### Tuesday August 4

#### Assignment:

Gustavo von Ha *Dreamwaves (Antennas of Dreams)*  
<http://www.von-ha.com/#!dreamwaves-macusp-english/c1m8i>  
Read about this project, watch trailer for video

Berndes, Christiane. "New Registration Models Suited to Modern and Contemporary Art." In Hummelen, IJsbrand & Dionne Sillé (eds.) *Modern Art: Who Cares?* Amsterdam: The Foundation for the Conservation of Modern Art and the Netherlands Institute for Cultural Heritage. 1999. [http://www.sbm.nl/uploads/introductie\\_tot\\_registratiemodellen.pdf](http://www.sbm.nl/uploads/introductie_tot_registratiemodellen.pdf)

Wharton, Glenn. "The Challenges of Conserving Contemporary Art." In Althuler, Bruce (ed.) *Collecting the New: Museums and Contemporary Art*. Princeton: Princeton University Press. 2006. 164-178.

Von Ha interviewers: develop questions & topics for interview

#### Session Topics:

The Museum Life of Contemporary Art part 2  
Documenting Variable Art  
Authenticity / Replication  
Artist Interview Preparation: Gustavo von Ha

### Wednesday August 5

#### Assignment:

Berkens, Lydia (et. al.) "Part I Guidelines: Practical Guide for the Artist Interview." In *The Artist Interview: For Conservation and Presentation of Contemporary Art Guidelines and Practice*. Heijningen: Jap Sam Books. 2012. 13-53.

Beunan, Annemare. "Moral Rights in Modern Art: An International Survey," In Hummelen, IJsbrand & Dionne Sillé (eds.) *Modern Art: Who Cares?* Amsterdam: The Foundation for the Conservation of Modern Art and the Netherlands Institute for Cultural Heritage. 1999. 222-232.

#### Session Topics:

MAC USP Museum Visit: Rafael França & Hudinilson Junior  
Working with Artists  
Artist Archives  
Artist Interview Preparation: Gustavo von Ha

### Thursday August 6

#### Assignment:

Dietz, Steve. "Collecting New-Media Art: Just Like Anything Else, Only Different". In Altshuler, Bruce (ed.) *Collecting the New: Museums and Contemporary Art*. Princeton: Princeton University Press. 2006. 85-101.

Guggenheim Museum. "Time-Based Media Conservation." <http://www.guggenheim.org/new-york/collections/conservation/time-based-media> (read the text on this website, especially *Establishing New Practices* and *Media Art Documentation*. Check out the *Iteration report*)

Matters in Media Art <http://www.tate.org.uk/about/projects/matters-media-art>

#### Session Topics:

Installation Art / Media Art / Software-Based Art

Translation & Reproduction

Artist Interview Preparation: Gustavo von Ha

### Friday August 7

#### Assignment:

Laurenson, Pip and Vivian van Saaze. "Collecting Performance-Based Art: New Challenges and Shifting Perspectives." In O. Remes (ed.) *Performativity in the Gallery: Staging Interactive Encounters*. Bern: Peter Lang. 2014. 27-41.

Tate Collecting the Performative <http://www.tate.org.uk/about/projects/collecting-performative>

Wharton, Glenn. "Public Access in the Age of Documented Art." *Revista de História da Arte*. Lisbon: Instituto de História da Arte. (In Press. March 2014)

#### Session Topics:

Artist interview: Gustavo von Ha

Performance Art

Conservation and the Public / Transparency / Crowd sourcing

MAC USP Museum Visit