Syllabus

In a burst of change that resonated across the world, the early 1960s witnessed the arrival of Pop Art. At first concentrated in the studios and galleries of lower Manhattan, its commercialized imagery and eye-catching colors soon made their appearance across the globe, providing the signature visual accompaniment for this notorious decade of youthful experimentation and dissent.

The fierce resistance encountered by early Pop artists such as Roy Lichtenstein and Andy Warhol demonstrated how severely Pop had challenged and shaken the existing hierarchy of culture. Attitudes of high seriousness and self-importance had typified fine art, qualities deemed antithetical to the everyday popular culture. That such images were invading galleries and museums seemed to signify the collapse of all that cherished exclusivity.

This accepting outlook on the artifacts and images of everyday life, however, was not as new as it appeared. In London, artists, designers, and dissident intellectuals had shown the way from the early 1950s. Similarly and much earlier in downtown Manhattan, sophisticated revivals of American folk art and music had brought popular expression to the fore as a counterweight to high-minded artistic imports from Europe.

As the idea of a Pop Art had been drawn from a wider world, so its innovations of the early 1960s soon migrated to the international counterculture. Young, non-conformist designers, musicians, and filmmakers applied that same artistic self-consciousness to their own endeavors. And these waves have persisted into the present.

Principal texts:
Robert Cantwell, *When We Were Good: The Folk Revival*
Calvin Tomkins, *Off the Wall: A Portrait of Robert Rauschenberg*
Michael Lobel, *Image Duplicator: Roy Lichtenstein and the Emergence of Pop Art*
Jonathan Gould, *Can’t Buy Me Love: The Beatles, Britain, and America*
Darsie Alexander et al, *International Pop*
Patti Smith, *Just Kids*

**Evaluation:**
Mid-term and final; short research paper due on the last day of class; weekly talking points in recitations

**Lecture topics and readings:**

**Jan. 22** Pop today: Jeff Koons, Takashi Murakami, Damien Hirst, Josephine Meckseper

**Jan. 24** Manhattan Sophisticates Find the Folk, 1930-1950
Crow: vii-18
Cantwell: pp. 12-47
Listening: Woody Guthrie, *Hard Travelin’: The Asch Recordings, vol 3*; Huddie Ledbetter, *Leadbelly Sings Folk Songs* (both NYU Library online access)

**Jan. 29** Harry Smith: Modern Magus in Manhattan, 1950-1955; Robert Frank and *The Americans, 1958*
Crow: 19-33
Cantwell: pp. 116-238

Crow, 55-78

**Feb. 5** Jasper Johns on target, 1954-1959
Tomkins, 99-109
Crow, 33-53

**Feb. 7** Claes Oldenburg in Chicago and lower Manhattan
Lecture by Antonia Pocock
Crow, 233-248
Crow, 79-105

Feb. 14  Andy Warhol the Adman meets Pushpin Studios, NY 1952-1962
Crow, 163-184

Feb. 19  Presidents' Day – no class

Feb. 21  Roy Lichtenstein and the neutering of the postwar comic, 1951-1964
Crow, 107-136
Lobel, 75-168

Feb. 26  James Rosenquist and Robert Indiana at Coenties Slip, NY 1959-1966:
Pop confronts race
Crow, 137-162, 184-205

Feb. 28  Pop in Germany, Italy, and Japan, 1962-1969
Alexander, 149-180
Hal Foster, “Gerhard Richter, or the Photogenic Image,” in
The First Pop Age, 172-209
viewing: Jean-Luc Godard dir., Contempt (Le Mépris), 1963 (Bobst reserve)

March 5  London, 1963-1967
Crow, 343-359
Gould, 161-425
viewing: Richard Lester dir., A Hard Day's Night, 1964 (Bobst reserve)
listening: The Beatles, Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Heart's Club Band (album; Bobst reserve)

March 7  Mid-term exam

March 19  From the desert to the sea: Los Angeles 1960-1966:
Crow, 207-232
listening: The Beach Boys, Pet Sounds (album; Bobst reserve)

March 21  David Hockey and Ed Ruscha: Los Angeles Outside and Inside, 1962-1966
Crow, 248-275
recommended: Joan Didion, Play It as It Lays
listening: The Byrds, Mr. Tambourine Man (album; Bobst reserve)

March 26  Bob Dylan and Andy Warhol, 1965
Crow, 275-312
viewing: D.A. Pennebaker dir., Don't Look Back, 1967 (Bobst reserve)
listening: Bob Dylan, Highway 61 Revisited (album; Bobst reserve)

Crow, 312-322
viewing: D.A. Pennebaker dir., *Monterey Pop*, 1968 (NYU Library online access)

**April 2**  Pop in the political counter-culture, 1967-1968
Crow, 325-343
Alexander, 119-130
viewing: Jean-Luc Godard dir., *La Chinoise*, 1967 (Bobst reserve)

**April 4**  London from Beatles to David Bowie, 1966-1974
Gould, 452-529
viewing: Michelangelo Antonioni dir., *Blow-Up*, 1966 (Bobst reserve)

**April 9**  Civic Crisis in New York, 1970-1979
Smith, *Just Kids*
listening; Patti Smith, *Horses* (album; Bobst reserve)

**April 11**  London 1976/Manchester 1980
Matthew Robertson, *Factory Records: The Complete Graphic Album*
Listening: *Never Mind the Bollocks: Here's the Sex Pistols*
Joy Division, *Unknown Pleasures* (albums: Bobst reserve)

**April 16**  Media Art: Pop Art returns in Downtown New York, 1976-1981
Lecture by Jennifer Buonocore
Peter Galassi, *Cindy Sherman: The Complete Untitled Film Stills*
listening: Talking Heads, *Remain in Light* (album: Bobst reserve)

**April 18**  Los Angeles from Skate to Punk to Hardcore, 1978-1985
Crow, 359-370
viewing: Paul Rachman, *American Hardcore*, 2006,
[http://www.veoh.com/watch/v11120791FXsHQhwN?h1=American+Hardcore+%28documentary_2006%29](http://www.veoh.com/watch/v11120791FXsHQhwN?h1=American+Hardcore+%28documentary_2006%29)

**April 23**  East Village Appropriation 1985-1988
Crow, 370-374
Alison Pearlman, *Unpackaging the Art of the 1980s*, 104-144

**April 25**  Otaku Japan: Murakami’s Superflat, 1994-2000
[https://ceramics14802.files.wordpress.com/2012/02/takashi_murakami-companyman.pdf](https://ceramics14802.files.wordpress.com/2012/02/takashi_murakami-companyman.pdf)

**April 30**  London “Young British Artists,” 1989-2000
Crow, 374-386
Norman Rosenthal ed., *Sensation: Young British Artists from the Saatchi Collection*
May 2 Mike Kelley and Anne Potégnie ed., *Educational Complex Onwards 1995-2008*, 160-193

May 7 Review and overview - Final paper due in class