

Contemporary Critical Issues

Threesomes+: Social Practice, Speculative Aesthetics, and Love

Professor: Ricardo Dominguez

The great epochs of our life are where we win the courage to rechristen our evil as what is best in us.

—NIETZSCHE, *Beyond Good and Evil*, §116

All art is either / revolution / or plagiarism

—Jennie Holzer haikus that, for a season, decorated the silent marquees of Times Square, NYC.

Some forms of speculative realism imagine the abyss of dynamism churning beneath things...(we) imagine the abyss to be in front of things.

—Timoth Morton, *Realist Magic: Objects, Ontology, Causality*

The thing I like about love as a concept for the possibility of the social, is that love always means non-sovereignty. Love is always about violating your own attachment to your intentionality, without being anti-intentional. I like that love is greedy. You want incommensurate things and you want them now. And the now part is important.

—Lauren Berlant, “No One is Sovereign in Love: A Conversation Between Lauren Berlant and Michael Hardt”

Art under the sign of the post-contemporary scene seeks attachments that are more than ONE, more than TWO, and more than THREE (or better yet an attachment to Threesomes+, not exactly an orgy, but a groping for group aesthetics and social practices, and wanting something more “than that.” (Something very close to a utopian or anti-anti utopian dialectical style—most certainly a standard threesome, if there ever was one!) Some of the Threesomes+ that we will entangle ourselves with, might be, as follows: relational, non-relational, and non-relational relationality; apprehension, effect and affect: social blockage, access, and excess; aesthetic autonomy, automated aesthetics, and alien aesthetics; transformation of forms, information, and de-formations as macro/micro-revolutions; queer ontologies, orgiastic spaces, and burnt offerings to make-out-new-times and spaces, or time as new make-out spaces; we will dance with

speculative objects that are always/already withdrawing, while uncanny things appear out of nowhere-and when we reach for a cup of coffee, we reach into the abyss. All of the above questions-bound, unbound, and rebound-by love, by what we did for love, by what we do for love, and by what love will do to us.

Room: VAF 366

Tuesdays: 8:00 am – 10: 50 am

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Office Hours: MON. 12 NOON to 1 PM (CAL IT2/Atkinson Hall 2nd fl – 2501)

Grading Policies and Evaluation:

25% Attendance, Participation and Presentation

25% Leading Discussion

25% 1 Project

25% Paper (One 10 page MLA style).

You will be expected to attend every class. If you have more than 2 unexcused absences, your final grade will drop a letter grade and 1/2 a letter for every additional unexcused absence that comes after. Two unexcused lateness will be considered an absence.

Schedule of Classes, Readings and Films:

Download:

Art and Social Change: A Critical Reader

<http://www.thing.net/~rdom/ucsd/3somesPlus>

Speculation: Aesthetics in the 21st Century

<http://www.thing.net/~rdom/ucsd/3somesPlus>

Desire/Love by Lauren Berlant

<http://www.thing.net/~rdom/ucsd/3somesPlus>

Oct. 7th – Introduction or Un Chant d' Amour

Watch: Un Chant d' Amour

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lHgb9_1LkWo

Watch Silvia Gruner: Un Chant d' Amor (DVD in Class).

Read: *Times Square Red, Times Square Blue* by Samuel R. Delany (Part one).

<http://www.thing.net/~rdom/ucsd/3somesPlus>

Read: “Speculative Aesthetics and Object-Oriented Inquiry (001)” by N. Katherine Hayles (Page 158).
<http://www.thing.net/~rdom/ucsd/3somesPlus>

Oct. 14th – Apprehension, Affect, and the Politics of Memory and History.

Watch: *Hiroshima mon amor* by Alain Resnais. Screenplay by Marguerite Duras (In Class).

Read: “Without Criteria” by Steven Shavero
<http://www.thing.net/~rdom/ucsd/3somesPlus>

“No One is Sovereign in Love: A Conversation Between Lauren Berlant and Michael Hardt”
<http://nomorepotlucks.org/site/no-one-is-sovereign-in-love-a-conversation-between-lauren-berlant-and-michael-hardt/>

Oct. 21st – Disobedient Objects, Circuit of Capital, and the Blasted Sublime

Watch: *Zabriskie Point*
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rK0g_J1hhDc

Read: “Insertions Into Ideological Circuits 1970- 75” by Cildo Meireies, *Art and Social Change: A Critical Reader* (page 181)
<http://www.thing.net/~rdom/ucsd/3somesPlus/>

Read: “Not Kant, Now Now: Another Sublime” Claire Colebrook, *Speculation: Aesthetics in the 21st Century* (page 127)
<http://www.thing.net/~rdom/ucsd/3somesPlus/>

Oct. 28th – Aesthetics Comes First, Brooding Politics, and Psychoplasms

Watch: *The Brood*

Read: “Politicizing Sandness” by Colectivo Situaciones, *Art and Social Change: A Critical Reader* (page 313)
<http://www.thing.net/~rdom/ucsd/3somesPlus>

Read: “Art and Guerrilla Metaphysics: Graham Harman and Aesthetics as First Philosophy” by Francis Halsall, *Speculation: Aesthetics in the 21st Century* (page 382)
<http://www.thing.net/~rdom/ucsd/3somesPlus>

Oct. Nov. 4th - The Avant in Avant-Garde: or wandering the ruins of the Next

Watch: *Fando y Lis* by Alejandro Jodorowsky
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AM-Ity6NuGU>

Read: “The Next Avant-Garde” by Graham Harman, *Speculation: Aesthetics in the 21st Century* (Page

251)

<http://www.thing.net/~rdom/ucsd/3somesPlus>

Read: “Invisible Theatre” by Augusto Boal, *Art and Social Change: A Critical Reader* (Page 213).

<http://www.thing.net/~rdom/ucsd/3somesPlus>

Nov. 11th – Queer Times, Queer Objects, and Queering Love

Watch: *Jubilee* by Derek Jarman

<http://vimeo.com/63941875>

Read: “Queer Temporality and Postmodern Geographies” by Judith Halberstam

<http://www.thing.net/~rdom/ucsd/3somesPlus/queertime.pdf>

Read: “Homonationalism As Assemblage: Viral Travels, Affective Sexualities” by Jasbir K Puar

<http://www.thing.net/~rdom/ucsd/3somesPlus/Puar.pdf>

Nov. 18th – Alien Love and its Alien Aesthetics

Watch: *Antiviral* by Brandon Cronenberg

Read: “The Alien Aesthetic of Speculative Realism, or, How Interpretation Lost the Battle to Materiality and How Comfortable this Is to Humans” by Roberto Simanowski, *Speculation: Aesthetics in the 21st Century* (page 359)

<http://www.thing.net/~rdom/ucsd/3somesPlus/>

“A Zombie Manifesto: The Nonhuman Condition in the Era of Advanced Capitalism”

by Sarah Juliet Lauro and Karen Embry

http://www.thing.net/~rdom/Zombies/A_Zombie_Manifesto.pdf

Nov. 25th – Algo/rithms of Machine Love

Watch: *HER* by Spike Jonze

Watch: *All Watched Over By Machines of Loving Grace* by Adam Curtis (Part 1 and 2)

<http://thoughtmaybe.com/all-watched-over-by-machines-of-loving-grace#top>

Read: “Spike Jonze’s HER” by Steven Shaviro

<http://www.shaviro.com/Blog/?p=1186>

Dec. 2nd – Strange Times, Strange Objects, Strange Aesthetics

Watch: *Strange Culture* by Lynn Hershman Leeson

Read: “Mayan Technologies and the Theory of Civil Disobedience” (Ricardo Dominguez Interviewed by Benjamin Shepard and Stephen Duncombe) (Page 319).

<http://www.thing.net/~rdom/ucsd/3somesPlus>

Read: “Mass action hacktivism: Anti-globalization and the importance of bad technology” from *Hacktivism and Cyberwar: Rebels with a Cause?* By Tim Jordan and Paul A. Taylor (page 67)
<http://www.thing.net/~rdom/ucsd/3somesPlus>

Dec. 9th - Presentations

Dec. 16th - Finals Week – Presentations of Projects.