

MINIMAL art

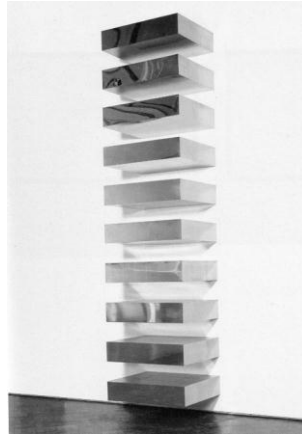
And

Architecture

ARCH 4109

College of Architecture
Georgia Institute of Technology

Donald Judd, "Untitled", 1969
Bldg. NYC, 1960



SOM,



PepsiCo

Objectives

This seminar approaches a segment of recent art history which, it can be argued, continues to offer material useful in the discussion of contemporary architecture. The terms *minimal* and *minimalist* are today commonly used to describe many things: art, architecture, interior design, music, fashion, food –even politics! To evoke the term *minimalism* one would do well to understand its origins, and to study the complex and often ambiguous art to which it was applied. A genuinely American art, minimalism emerged out of the growing art industrial “complex” of New York City in the 1960’s, which supplanted Paris as the world’s top market. The outward appearance of minimalist art – formally reductive and without “expression”, made of repetitive parts or singular elements, embracing industrial or commonplace materials, invites comparison -in a purely visual sense, with architecture/landscape constructions. This seminar aims to go beyond formal appearances in search of ideas, concepts, and intuitions that might link works of art to architectural work. The purpose might then be to ask: “How do minimal art strategies and sensibilities condition our perception of buildings, places, and urban landscapes?” And, perhaps more importantly, “How can a *minimalist* architecture contribute to contemporary discourse and debate regarding the issues of *place* and *place-making*?”

Procedure

Lectures and discussions will first situate *Minimalism* historically and in relation to developments in American art since 1900, particularly painting and sculpture. The writings of minimal artists and their critics will spotlight the emergence of minimal art in NYC. Offshoots of minimalism, such as land art, phenomenal and installation art, will be discussed as they are seen to “approach architecture”. Finally, examples of regional and global architectural “minimalism” will be made subject to themes and criteria emerging from the class discussion of Minimal Art theory and practice. Finally, speculative presentations by students will question whether the appropriation of minimal art strategies by architects is being done critically (or successfully) and whether a “minimal architecture” is viable as an art-oriented practice.

Requirements

Attendance to all lectures, discussions and films is required. More than three unexcused absences results in the loss of a letter grade. The literature on Minimal Art keeps growing. Readings have been selected to provide historical background, basic information, and to stimulate discussion. Students are expected to complete the required weekly readings prior to Thursday classes which are reserved for discussion. Since our topic is art and architecture, it is expected that visual materials on reserve will be consulted prior to discussions.

Evaluation 1. Participation in weekly class discussions - 30%

2. A five-page paper (not including illustrations) comparing 2 art works or artists counts 20%
3. A five-page paper (not including illustrations) comparing art with architecture counts 20%
4. A final in-class presentation will count 30%. An outline of the final talk must be approved.

To Access the Readings:

1. Go to library.gatech.edu
2. From menu, choose **reserves**, then **on-line reserves**
3. Enter GT ID, then select ARCH 6109 / 4109 for the readings

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Richard Serra, "Union of the Torus and the Sphere", 2001 Dia-Beacon, NY

Schedule
Week One

Orienting Themes and Problems

Introduction / Course Orientation and Requirements / Writing Assignment

- Readings:
1. David Batchelor. Minimalism: Movements in Modern Art. Cambridge Press, 1997. *Introduction*, pp.6-13
 2. Gregory Battcock, *Preface to Minimal Art: A Critical Anthology*, pp.19-36
 3. Walter Benjamin, "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction" *Illuminations*, Cape Press, London, 1970
 4. John Berger. Ways of Seeing. BBC/Penguin Books, London, 1972. *Chapter 1*.

Week Two

American Art 1900-1950: Realism, Abstraction, Modernism

Discussion of Week One Readings. One Page Assessments Due. "Interest in Course" paragraphs due

Reading: Jonathan Harris, Modernism in Dispute/Art since the Forties. Yale Press, 1983. Chpt.1, Part 1: "Capitalist Crisis and artistic culture during the 1930's", pp3-41.

Supplemental: Edward Lucie-Smith, American Realism, H.N. Abrams, NY, 1994. (on reserve) Scan Chapters 5 and 6. View the paintings (Bellows, Sheeler, Demuth, Crawford)

45 minute lecture

Discussion: American Realism "into" Abstraction. Modernist Culture and Politics, City vs. "Nature"

Week Three

New York 1945-1969: Hands and Minds

Reading:

1. Clement Greenberg, "Modernist Painting", Art in Modern Culture: an Anthology of Critical Texts, F. Frascina, J. Harris, eds., Phaidon Press, London, 1992, pp. 308-314.
2. Barbara Rose, "The New American Painting", chpt. 7, American Art Since 1900, Praeger Publ. NY, 1967, pp.189-210.

Supplemental:

1. Barnett Newman, "The Plasmic Image", in Theories and Documents of Contemporary Art, pp24-26.
2. Jackson Pollock, "Guggenheim Application" (1947), and Interview w/ William Wright (1950), in Theories and Documents of Contemporary Art, pp22-24.

Discussion: Content vs. Form, Realism vs. Romanticism, Paint vs. Word

Movie: Painters Painting: The New York Art Scene from 1950-1970. Auditorium. Time TBA

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Giovanni Anselmo, "Untitled", 1969

Week Four

The Ascension of Minimal Art in New York in the 1960's: Painting into Sculpture

- Reading:
1. James Meyer, Minimalism: Art and Polemics in the Sixties, Introduction pp. 1-6, Spring 1966 –A Tour of Primary Structures, pp. 11-30
 2. Barbara Rose, "ABC Art", in Minimal Art: A Critical Anthology, pp.274-297
 3. Frank Stella/ Donald Judd, "Questions to Stella and Judd by Bruce Glaser (1966)", Theories and Documents of Contemporary Art, pp. 117-124.

Discussion: Critical Reception of the "new" art. The gallery scene. The artist as intellectual.

Week Five

Objects / Materials / Ethico-aesthetics?: American Minimalism and European Arte Povera

- Reading:
1. Michael Fried, "Art and Objecthood", Minimal Art: A Critical Anthology, pp.116-148.
 2. Germano Celant, "Arte Povera" (1969 essay), Arte Povera, Arte Povera, Electa, Milan, 1985. In *Themes and Movements Series*, Phaidon, London, 1999.
 3. Robert Morris, "Notes on Sculpture", Minimal Art: A Critical Anthology, pp.222-236.
 4. Donald Judd, "Specific Objects", Theories and Documents of Contemporary Art, pp. 114-117.

Discussion: Mind/Body Problems, Nature/Technology

ARTworks COMPARISON Paper Due

Week Six

The Minimal(ist) HINGE: architecture / landscape / photography

- Reading:
1. Hal Foster, "The Crux of Minimalism", The Return of the Real, MIT Press, 1996 pp.35-68.
 2. Rosalind Krauss, "Sculpture in the Expanded Field", The Anti-Aesthetic: Essays on Postmodern Culture, ed. Hal Foster, pp.31-42.
 3. Robert Smithson, "Entropy and the New Monuments", from Robert Smithson, The Collected Writings, pp10-24.

Discussion: New Spaces and Territories, Architecture and Sculpture dialectics

Week Seven

Art, Spirit, Technology: Mies, Heidegger and Minimalism

- Reading:
1. Ignasi de Sola-Morales, "Mies van der Rohe and Minimalism", Differences: Topographies of Contemporary Architecture, MIT Press, 1997. Chapter 2, pp29-40.
 2. K. Michael Hays, "Odysseus and the Oarsman, or, Mies's Abstraction Once Again", The Presence of Mies, ed. Detlef Mertins, Princeton Press, 1994. pp. 235-247.
- Supplemental:
- K. Michael Hays, "The Mies Effect", Mies in America, ed. Phyllis Lambert, Abrams NY, 2001, pp. 692-705

Discussion: Building Voids, Spatial and Material Issues

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Luis Barragan, Rooftop Court
Own House and Studio, Mexico City, 1947

Week Eight Regional Minimalism I: Ando, Barragan, Lewerentz

- Reading:
1. Kenneth Frampton, "The Work of Tadao Ando", Labour, Work and Architecture, Phaidon, London, 2002, pp.304-317.
 2. Luis Barragan, Official Address, 1980 Pritzker Architecture Prize, 3 June 1980.

- Supplemental:
1. Tadao Ando, "The Wall as Territorial Delineation", Japan Archt. 254, June 1978.
 2. Luis Barragan, "Secret Gardens", Address to the California Council of Architects and the Sierra Nevada Regional Conference, Coronado, California. 6 Oct. 1951.

Discussion: Matter and Spirit in the East and West. Cultural conditions and the culture of Abstraction

Week Nine Regional Minimalism II: Swiss/German, Spanish/Iberian Production

- Reading:
1. Martin Steinmann, "The Presence of Things: Comments on Recent Architecture in Northern Switzerland", Construction/Intention/Detail: 5 Projects from 5 Swiss Architects
 2. "Conversation between Jacques Lucan and Martin Steinmann", A Matter of ART: Contemporary Architecture in Switzerland, Birkhauser, Basel, 2001, pp.8-25.
 3. Kenneth Frampton, "Minimal Moralia: Reflections on Recent Swiss German Production", Labour, Work and Architecture: Collected Essays on Architecture and Design, Phaidon, London, 2002, pp. 324-331.

Discussion: Tectonics, Fashion, Architecture

ART and ARCHITECTURE Paper Due!!

Special Guest: Dr. Frances Hsu

Week Ten Other Practices : Pawson, Chipperfield, Perrault, SANAA, Adjaye

- Reading:
1. Mark Linder, Chapter 6 + Postscript, Nothing Less Than Literal: Architecture After Minimalism, MIT Press, Cambridge, 2004, pp.205-225.
 2. John Pawson, Minimum, *Introduction*, pp7-15. Scan the images.
 3. Francisco Asensio Cerver, *Introduction*, The Architecture of Minimalism, Hearst Books International, 1999. Scan the projects.

Discussion:

Week Eleven March 22-26 SPRING BREAK

Week Twelve

STUDENT PRESENTATIONS Session 1

STUDENT PRESENTATIONS Session 2

Week Thirteen

STUDENT PRESENTATIONS Session 3

STUDENT PRESENTATIONS Session 4

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Haim Steinbach, "Untitled (daybed, coffin)", 1989

Week Fourteen

STUDENT PRESENTATIONS Session 5

Minimal Practices in Relation to Place and Non-Place: "Never Look Empty, Never Feel Full"

- Reading:
1. Francis Colpitt, Minimal Art: The Critical Perspective, U of Wash. Press, Seattle, 1990. "Theoretical Issues", pp. 101-135.
 2. Wilfried Wang, "In Search of Aura", Monolithic Architecture, ed. Rodolfo Machado / Rodolphe el-Khoury, Prestel-Verlag, Munich/NY, 1995, pp.62-71
 3. Ignasi de Sola-Morales, "Weak Architecture", Differences, MIT Press, Cambridge, 1997, pp. 57-71.

Week Fifteen

Summary Discussions

Discussion: Architecture and Minimal Art – Theory and Practice

Discussion: Architecture and Art –Ethics and Aesthetics in the Present

Week Sixteen

JURY WEEK

Presentation Reports and CD's are DUE.