

NCAD Critical Cultures elective programme, semester 2, 2020

Students will be asked to sign up electronically. An email sign up form has been sent to your NCAD email account. Please complete the form and press submit by **midday Wednesday 15th January**. If you miss the deadline, we will allocate you a place on one of the electives automatically.

If you've not received the electronic email sign up form, please email visualculture@staff.ncad.ie

All students take one elective except for 'Joint Course' students and second year Visual Culture students who take two. Year 2 education students take one.

All classes start on Wednesday 22nd January 2020.

You should hear which class you are in by Monday 20th January 2020.



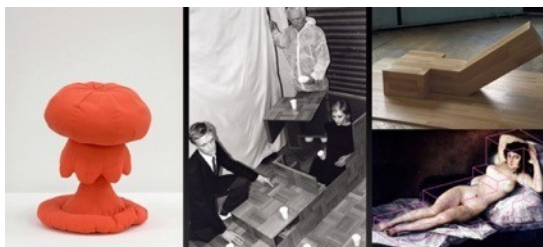
Andy Warhol curating *Raid the Icebox* (RISD Museum, 1969)

1. Exhibition Makers taught by Sarah Pierce on Wednesdays 9.30 – 11.30, Nicola Gordon Bowe Room

What is an exhibition? What does it mean to put things on display? Is there such a thing as a 'philosophy of exhibitions'? This course looks at exhibition-making as a contemporary practice, with particular focus on the artist as an exhibition-maker. We will examine too exhibition design through historical examples as well as visual mediation with respect to installations and exhibitions in museum contexts. Each session will focus on key examples and a key reading. The aim is to help participants think about their own work and what it means to 'show' in a given context - whether a self-organised project or the Final Year exhibition. We will use historical and present-day examples to explore the exhibition through its institutional, social, historical and philosophical practices and methodologies.

2. Contemporary Design: Designer as Agent of Change taught by Kate Buckley on Wednesdays 9.30 – 11.30, Maurice O'Connell Room

This course provides a framework for the description, experience, critical analysis and discussion of contemporary design practice and cultures. It will explore specific themes within contemporary design such as sustainability, technology and critical design as well as exploring ideas and projects related to protest, post-humanism, design dissent and design for debate. Through image and video-based lectures, students will be introduced to ideas and theories that have informed our contemporary understanding of design and develop an understanding of past and current trends, assumptions and values in the design world. We will investigate how designers have become agents of change, how design practice has evolved to encompass new technologies and also explore the future of contemporary design practice.



Richard Moynan, *Killiney Sands*, 1894

3. European Influences on Irish and British Art taught by Maebh O'Regan on Wednesdays 9.30-11.30 Harry Clarke Lecture Theatre

In the late 19th century it became fashionable for art-students from Ireland and England to study in Paris and other European Art schools. Change was in the air and European artists began to take advantage of new, more portable art materials and public transport systems and they began to paint out in the landscape. This group, known as *The Impressionists* had a profound influence on Irish and British art.

This course looks at how Irish and British artists, who studied on the Continent between 1870 and 1920, absorbed and reinterpreted their subject matter in light of their European education. It explores how they reimagined their domestic landscape, their urban and rural

environments and the emerging political situation. The course includes a site visit to the National Gallery of Ireland and the Yeats Museum to view some wonderful examples of Irish and European art.

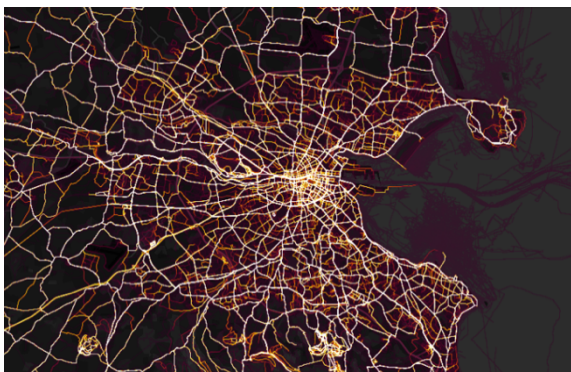
4. *Crossed wires, Crosscurrents, Crossdressing* taught by Denis Kehoe on Wednesdays 9.30-11.30, HC2.03 Philip Treacy Room

This seminar series will explore the incidence of crossdressing from Shakespearean times to the present day, examining figures such as James Miranda Barry, Claude Cahun and Grayson Perry along the way. It will trace how crossdressing can be a liberating, subversive, dangerous and creative practice and will investigate its existence and representation across cultures and languages, from the South American film *Kiss of the Spiderwoman* to the sworn virgins of the Balkans. Examples from popular culture such as the film *Boys Don't Cry* and the Amazon series *Transparent*, will be interrogated. An attempt will be made to show how crossdressing frequently challenges overly simplistic notions about gender, sexuality, identity and desire. Each week an artist, film, novel, TV programme etc., will be dissected and discussed alongside a key theoretical text from writers such as Jack/Judith Halberstam, Judith Butler, Julia Kristeva, Leslie Feinberg and Michel Foucault.



Untitled (I am in training, don't kiss...), Claude Cahun, 1929

5. *Systems and Network Aesthetics* taught by Francis Halsall, Wednesdays 11.30-1.30 Harry Clarke Lecture Theatre



Strava heat-map of Dublin

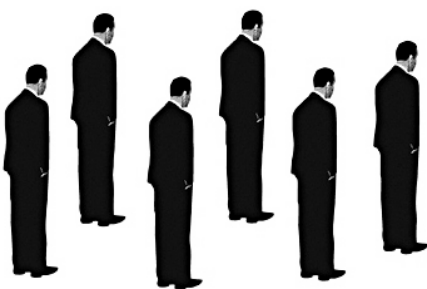
We live, as Gawande puts it, in the “Century of the System.” From networks of Social Media to the emerging Internet of Things; from health-care systems to furniture systems, air-conditioning systems, clothing systems and many others, systems and networks are embedded into our life, and us into them. In a recent speech the activist Greta Thunberg warned of the grave dangers of not taking systems seriously: “We cannot solve a crisis without treating it as a crisis. We need to keep the fossil fuels in the ground and we need to focus on equity. And if solutions within this system are so impossible to find then maybe we should change the system itself.” (COP24 plenary session December 12, 2018)

Clearly, then, the systems and networks we rely on and take for granted are far from neutral but have social, political, epistemological and ethical consequences. They shape the way we live and think.

The aim of this seminar is to interrogate some definitions of key terms in the theories of systems and networks and demonstrate how these can be applied to a wide variety of cultural practices including art and design. We will reflect on the aesthetics of digital and (so-called) new media alongside other implications of the applications of systems and networks as metaphors for complex forms of organisation.

This seminar has been conceived to explore ideas related to the forthcoming exhibition *SYSTEMS* in the Science Gallery, Dublin (June – Sept. 2020)

6. *Tactical Media, Critical Design & Hacker Culture* taught by Rachel O'Dwyer, Wednesdays 11.30 - 1.30, HC2.03 Philip Treacy Room



In this class we will explore the ways in which artists, designers and activists use digital and networked media technologies to present alternative and marginalised views and/or to resist dominant politics and dominant culture. The material covered will cut across different time periods and social movements (histories of hacking from Dadaism and Situationism through to the role of Anonymous); different media forms; and different issues (biological, environmental, economic, spatial and algorithmic activism). We will also look at some of the failures and limitations of these practices within the context of recent controversies around fake-news, algorithmic governance and online trolling.

7. *Understanding the Artworld in the Age of Neoliberal Globalisation* taught by Emma Mahony, Wednesdays 11.30 - 1.30, Maurice O'Connell Room

When you graduate from NCAD you will need the knowledge, tools and skills to negotiate the art world, which includes a thorough understanding of how it operates, and values and inequalities that shape it. This module offers a critical overview of the artworld and the various institutions that comprise it, including the art museum, the commercial gallery, the global biennial, the art fair, the art auction and art in the public realm.

The module begins by exploring the birth and evolution of the public art museum from its origins in the private collections of the aristocracy and the church, to the role the early museum played as a mechanism for governing citizens. It

then examines the shift from arm's length cultural policy (introduced across Europe after WW2 to prevent the instrumentalisation of art and culture by the state), to a facilitator model of cultural policy, which has internalised the values and practices of neoliberalism, namely deregulation, trade liberalisation and privatisation. It looks at how the criteria used to justify state expenditure on culture has been largely reduced to economics and fails to take account of the other roles art and culture plays in society.



Guerrilla Girls, *Do Women Have to Be Naked to Get Into the Met. Museum?*, 1989. Poster. © Guerrilla Girls. Courtesy guerrillagirls.com.

8. Thinking about Photography taught by Fiona Loughnane, Wednesdays 11.30 - 1.30 Nicola Gordon Bowe Room



Lee Friedlander, *New Orleans*, 1970

Photography surrounds us. On a daily basis we take and view countless photographic images. But it's a slippery and fugitive medium, with constantly changing technologies and processes, allowing images to be widely circulated and reproduced in a bewildering range of contexts. Photography is part of a modern expansion of vision which opens the world to our view; but is also a means through which we ourselves are increasingly subject to the gaze of others. This elective will introduce critical ideas about photography drawing from key figures such as: Roland Barthes; John Szarkowski; Luigi Ghirri; Kaja Silverman; Ariella Azoulay and John Tagg. The course will include both historic and contemporary forms, ranging from the carte de visite to Instagram. While the work of notable photographers – such as Lee Friedlander, Susan Meiselas, and Trevor Pagalen – will be discussed, the course will also engage with anonymous, vernacular and commercial practices. Ultimately, this elective will introduce debates about the essential characteristics of photography and its diverse functions and situations.

9. Making in Craft and Design taught by Sorcha O'Brien, Wednesdays 1.30-3.30, Maurice O'Connell Room

This elective seminar will look at the cultural, social and political contexts of craft and design, particularly in terms of different types of making, both historical and current. It will focus on issues surrounding the making and production of objects, who gets access to different technologies of making and why. Types of making considered range from embroidery to 3D printing, looking at concepts of skill, flow and workmanship and how they affect the making process. It will look at issues surrounding access to the knowledge and skills of making in relation to gender, the handmade and amateur making, as well as more recent developments around fixing and modding.

How to Guide: Makeshift Tear-Gas Mask. Illustrated by Marwan Kaabour, at Barnbrook, for the V&A Disobedient Objects exhibition, 2014



10. Fashioning Film. Clothing, the Body and Affective Aesthetics taught by Liza Foley, Wednesdays 1.30-3.30 Harry Clarke Lecture Theatre

This elective explores the interrelationship between fashion and film, looking at how both mediums influence each other, both materially and aesthetically. In particular, we will examine how clothing operates as a powerful narrative device, linking it to broader cinematic constructions of identity, sexuality, addiction, grief, memory and the imaginary. Both cinema and



Nicolas Roeg, *Don't Look Now*, 1973.

clothing are multi-sensory mediums, intimately tied to the body and its surfaces. Therefore, this elective will also explore the 'affective' nature of fashion and film by integrating theories of embodiment, perception and temporality, and drawing on a range of approaches including film analysis, fashion theory, anthropology and phenomenology. Case studies will span a wide time frame and integrate a broad range of both avant-garde and mainstream film makers, including Serji Parajanov, Shauna Beharry, Nicolas Roeg, Darren Aronofsky and Nicolas Winding-Refn.

11. Cloth and Clothing, Idea, Object, Image taught by Hilary O'Kelly, Wednesdays 1.30-3.30, HC2.03 Philip Treacy Room

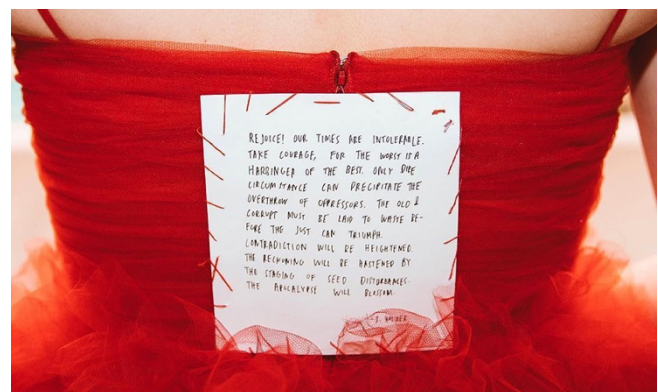
Dress is an essential expression of being human, and increasingly recognized as a universal factor in social and political negotiation. More immediate, more personal and often more intensely experienced than many other forms of art, design or visual culture; clothing materialises the connection between the body and the outer world.

This elective course will focus on cloth and clothing as forms of expression, creativity and conformity to explore the role of dress in shaping culture, identity and authority. Spanning history, modernity and the contemporary world, an indicative range of subjects to be explored in the seminar series will include drapery and femininity; tailoring and masculinity; hair, head and veils; dress and adornment.



12. 'Rejoice! Our Times Are Intolerable': Art and Culture since 2016 taught by Declan Long, Wednesdays 1.30-3.30, Nicola Gordon Bowe Room

What notable examples of art have emerged in response to the presidency of Donald Trump? In what way has contemporary culture registered the impact of the UK's Brexit vote? How have artists — in Ireland and elsewhere — addressed newly pressing issues of central concern to feminist politics? What types of artistic programming have been developed by museums and galleries across the world in this recent period of convulsive, and often oppressive, politics? What case studies from the wider field of culture — music, literature, film — can help us to think through the anxieties of our present-day political predicaments?



Lorde wearing Jenny Holzer to the Grammys, 2018

This elective seminar series will offer a chance to study how contemporary artists — and other types of cultural practitioner — have responded to recent social and political transformations around the world, as well as offering an occasion to look afresh at the role art and artists might play more broadly within society during challenging times.

Topics to be addressed include the rise of political populism, authoritarianism, extreme nationalism and the emergence of the 'alt-right'; the impact of #MeToo and new feminist movements; the 'refugee crisis' and effects of mass migration; the cultural and political representation of 'borders'; the visibility and variety of public protest; the paradoxical potential of social media and the contentious phenomenon of 'fake news'; racism and its resistance; the unavoidable significance of climate change.

In exploring these and other issues we will look at diverse artists who have made directly topical work in response to these difficult matters. But we will also address art — and various forms of contemporary culture — that is more indirectly contextualised or motivated by these concerns. In certain cases too we will look at artists from earlier eras who have, recently, been positioned by museums and galleries as culturally important points of reference for our current times.

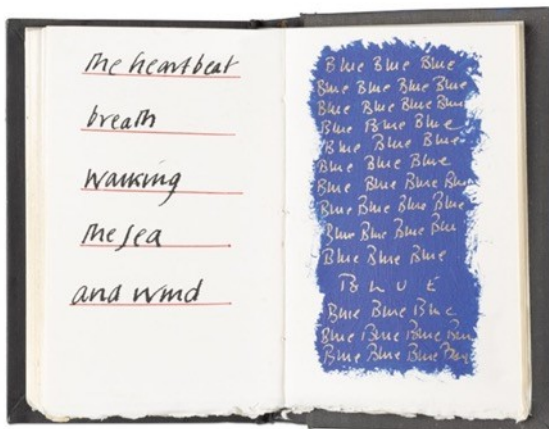
These seminars will seek to engage with contemporary culture in a 'live' way, rather than depending on a canon of pre-approved works and key figures. As such, students will be challenged to contribute their own references on a weekly basis, to read set texts from a wide variety of sources and to actively participate in discussions that address complex contemporary subjects.

13. *Once Upon a Time in Cinema* taught by Denis Kehoe 3.30 -5.30, HC2.03 Philip Treacy Room

What is the role of the director in a film?
How does the director put her or his imprint on their work? How do they construct a narrative in a way that is specific to them? How do the films they make represent wider social, political and historical themes and events? This seminar series will examine the work of ten key directors, from the origins of cinema in the 1890s to the present day. Amongst the directors under discussion will be Quentin Tarantino, Sofia Coppola, Claire Denis, Pedro Almodóvar, Jane Campion, Spike Lee and Alfred Hitchcock. The films of these directors will be explored through a variety of lenses including psychoanalysis, theories of gender and race, Marxism, postcolonialism and auteur theory. Connections will be drawn between their creations and the worlds of fashion, graphic design, architecture and music. This elective would be ideal for anybody who wants to deepen their knowledge of the history of cinema and investigate the various potentialities of the medium of film.



Asier Etxeandia, the director Pedro Almodóvar and Antonio Banderas



Page from Derek Jarman's Sketchbooks © Thames & Hudson (2013)

14. *Psychology of Space* taught by Silvia Loeffler, Wednesdays 3.30-5.30, Maurice O'Connell Room

This seminar series explores why we belong to certain spaces and are disconnected from others, and who 'we' are in the wide variety of spatial contexts. We will discuss 'the right to the city', urban and rural divides, migration politics and emotional mappings, based on philosophical key texts by Giuliana Bruno, Henri Lefebvre and Elizabeth Wilson. We will define notions of blue and green space and look at the desire for rewilding and greening. We will discuss how artists like Motoi Yamamoto and Betty Beaumont and design collaboratives like The Decorators and MASS Design Lab support environmental and social sustainability, and how memory, trauma and mourning can be counter-balanced with transformation, hope and healing.

15. Vibrant Forms – Reconsidering the Built Environment Through Sound taught by Sven Anderson, Wednesdays 3.30-5.30 Nicola Gordon Bowe Room

Vibrant Forms explores contemporary sonic arts practices as a means of re-evaluating the built environment, introducing tactics that probe architecture, public space, and urban experience from an aural perspective. Each session will evolve through lectures, discussions, and listening sessions that employ sound to challenge the ocular-centric perspectives that dominate contemporary art and design discourse. The course will review sound installation practices set within the

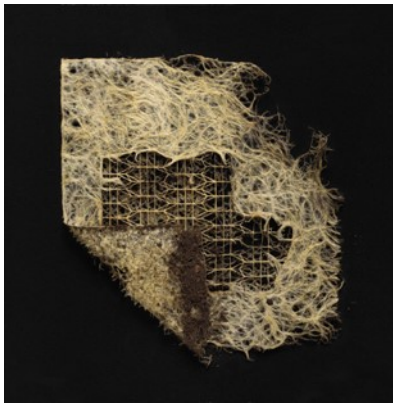


parameters of the gallery and the biennale as well as within the more actively contested space of the city. Participants will discuss curatorial approaches to sound alongside critical texts that navigate the emergent canon of sound art, pursuing a variety of sonic tangents but returning to a focus on the relationship between sound and space within each session. Over the course of the semester, *Vibrant Forms* will chart the intersections between sonic arts practice and other disciplines including architecture, urban design, and environmental acoustics, as well as with other strands of artistic production.

Hans Rosenström, *From The Top Floor* (2016). Sound installation for S.O.S. Save Our Souls, Art For a Time of Urgencies; Seoul, South Korea.

16. Thinking Through Materials: Theory, Method, Practice taught by Liza Foley, Wednesdays 3.30-5.30, Harry Clarke Lecture Theatre

We live in a world surrounded and constituted by materials (concrete, wood, metal, plastic, leather). Yet despite their prevalence in our lives, our preoccupation with their position as objects or ‘things’ (smartphones, furniture, clothing) means that they often go unnoticed. In this elective we will critically reflect on our use and understanding of materials. Drawing on different theoretical approaches, we will examine what they are, how we define them and how we can gain different types of knowledge (social, cultural, environmental) from them. Focusing on individual cases studies - from the cultivation of cotton to the development graphene-enhanced spider silk - we will also explore their role in human and non-human development (and destruction), and the ways in which their various properties and applications help stimulate different sensory, emotional and imaginative experiences. Seminars will include lectures, readings, videos and practical hands-on sessions, and will draw on a range of contemporary practices from the temporal artworks of Andy Goldsworthy to the root-bound textiles of Diana Scherer to the spider-web sculptures of Tomás Saraceno.



Diana Scherer, *Rootbound # 1*, 2019