Dorothea Tanning, *Canapé en temps de pluie* (Rainy-Day Canapé), 1970
Tweed, upholstered wood sofa, wool, Ping-Pong balls, and cardboard. Philadelphia Museum of Art.
COURSE DESCRIPTION

Following le hazard objectif – the path of “objective chance” – the Surrealists traversed the boundaries of geography, bourgeois morality and disciplinary specificity in search of the absolute liberation of the mind. This course examines the emergence and philosophical foundations of Surrealism, its literary and ideological contexts, and its pervasive influence and legacy in twentieth century art and thought.

Drawing from a diverse range of practices and mediums (painting, sculpture, film, photography, installation, performance) and disciplines (literature, ethnography, philosophy), we will consider André Breton’s vision for the movement as the fusion of Dadaist irreverence with Marxist ideology and Freudian psychoanalysis, as well as the counter-movements formed by dissenting members (Georges Bataille, André Masson, Roger Caillois).

Particular focus is given to Surrealist interventions in metropolitan space (a magnetic field of desire and potential revolution), to a broader historical trajectory of French urban encounters, from Baudelairean flaneury through to Situationist détournement. Other themes include the role of journals in the aesthetic and theoretical dissemination of revolutionary ideals, the de-instrumentalising role of the Surrealist object, Surrealist exhibition and display, mad love and Sadean eroticism, ethnography and anti-colonial politics, and the renewal of community with myth and the sacred.

AIMS

This program aims to develop a critical understanding of the emergence, evolution and legacy of Surrealism. It will introduce students to unique set of Surrealist methodologies and artistic practices, such as automatism, juxtaposition, and de-individualised processes and outcomes, which will in turn encourage students to identify Surrealistic tendencies in contemporary art.

The inter-disciplinary nature of this course will also develop students understanding of the critical and theoretical framework of Surrealism, including the effects of war and the political tensions of the inter-war period, colonial and anti-colonial discourse, capitalism and its critiques, avant-garde secularism and sexuality, and the rise of the women’s movement. Students will be expected to interpret the influence of these frameworks on the visual culture of the Surrealists with a close examination of a range of objects and events. Students will be able to identify key theorists and practitioners and assess the significance of Dada and Surrealism to the development of post-structuralist thought and postmodern/contemporary practice.

LITERACY OUTCOMES

Assessment criteria are linked to literacy outcomes for 2nd and 3rd year students, including research, critical analysis, and preparation of formal essay writing.

PENALTY FOR LATE ESSAYS

All assessments must be completed to pass AHT courses. If you are having difficulties and need to discuss assessments, please speak with your lecturer well in advance of the due date. Late assessments are penalized at the following rates: 1-6 days, 10%, 7-13 days, 20%, 14-20 days, 30%. If illness or misadventure has prevented you from submitting your assignment by the due date you may apply to have the late penalties lifted by filling out an Application to Waive Late Penalty form available on the AHT website under the Assessment Policy and Penalties tab. Fill out this form and email it, with supporting documentation (e.g. medical certificate, letter from a treating professional), to Jaime Tsai upon submitting your assignment.
LECTURE TIME/LOCATION:

5-7 Mondays  
Online access via Vimeo:  
https://vimeo.com/showcase/6938191  
PASSWORD: AHT261

COURSE SCHEDULE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WEEK</th>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>TOPIC</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>March 23</td>
<td>Dream</td>
<td>André Breton, Manifestoes of Surrealism, trans. Richard Seaver and Helen Lane (Michigan: Ann Arbor, University of Michigan Press, 1972) 9-14, 19-29</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>April 20</td>
<td>Dialectics</td>
<td>André Breton, ‘Surrealist Situation of the Object,’ in Manifestoes of Surrealism, 255-77</td>
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<td>APRIL 27 ANZAC DAY HOLIDAY</td>
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| 8 | May 18 | Politics | Breton, ‘Second Manifesto of Surrealism,’ *Manifestoes of Surrealism*, 138-150  
| 12 | June 15 | Cinema | Susan Behrends Frank, excerpt from “Un Chien andalou” and “L’Age d’or”: The collaborations of Salvador Dali and Luis Bunuel, The University of Iowa, Dissertation, 1996 |
ASSESSMENT

CRITICAL ESSAY 100%

Turnitin Details:
Class ID: 23852844
Enrolment key: AHT261

2000 word essay due on Sunday June 21 before midnight. Please ensure that your paper conforms to the word limit, and is left-aligned, typed in a 12pt font and double-spaced. Footnotes and bibliography are required in Chicago style and marks will be deducted for inadequate research and referencing. For help with essay writing conventions, or for help in uploading your essay to Turnitin, see the AHT website: www.nasaht.com.au

ESSAY QUESTIONS

1. Examine the role of photography in Surrealist journals with reference to three specific examples. (Journals include Acéphale, Un Cadavre, the Surrealist Revolution, Surrealism in the Service of the Revolution, DOCUMENTS, Minotaure, VVV)
2. How and why did Surrealist exhibition practices contrast to traditional ones? Evaluate their success with reference to two Surrealist exhibitions from the 1930s or 1940s.
3. The transformation the Surrealist journal The Surrealist Revolution to the more political Surrealism in the Service of the Revolution, hints at the tension between being a ‘good Communist’ and a liberated artist. Is it possible to make good political art that isn’t propaganda or, as Breton would have it, populist or ‘dumbed-down’ literature for the masses? In your answer you must refer to Breton’s Surrealist manifestoes.
4. What was the attraction of “primitive” objects and societies to the Surrealist artists (and/or writers such as Breton, Eluard, Bataille, Caillois, Leiris)?
5. How did Freud’s psychoanalysis OR the Marquis de Sade’s writing offer the Surrealists an alternative to bourgeois morality and sexuality? Respond with reference to two works, whether art objects, novels, or films.
6. Why is urban space so important politically, socially and psychologically to the Surrealists? Answer with reference to three specific events, interventions, representations (visual or literary) and/or legacies.
8. Evaluate the ways in which the activities and interests of the Situationist International (psychogeographies, détournement, dérive) were influenced by Surrealist street practice. Do you believe this type of urban revolt still exists in France today?
9. Consider the challenge to art offered by Bataille’s concept of the informe (formless). Respond with reference to three visual examples.

10. Breton, Bataille and The College of Sociology wanted to renew myth in contemporary society. Why?

11. Using three examples, examine why Surrealist women artists of the twentieth century were drawn to self-portraiture.

12. The Spanish Civil War produced diverse visual and literary reactions from the Surrealist artists and poets. Consider these reactions and the political allegiances of two artists/poets (Breton, Louis Aragon, Pablo Neruda, Dali, Picasso, Miro, Masson) by giving a detailed analysis of one artwork/poem for each artist.

Further Reading:
* Readings that are starred are journal articles that have been made available for photocopy from the NAS library. Ask library staff for the AHT261 folder.

Week 1.

Week 2.
- Goldwater, Robert, Space and Dream (New York: Walker 1968, c1967)

Week 3.

Week 4.
- Kachur, Lewis, Displaying the Marvelous, Marcel Duchamp, Salvador Dali, and Surrealist Exhibition Installations (New York: MIT, 2001)

Week 5.

**Week 6.**

- Spiteri, Raymond and Donald LaCoss (eds.), *Surrealism, Politics and Culture* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2003)

**Week 7.**


**Week 8.**


**Week 9.**

- Ross, Kristin, The Emergence of Social Space: Rimbaud and the Paris Commune, foreword Terry Eagleton (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1988)

Week 10.
- Richardson, Michael, Surrealism and Cinema (Oxford; New York: Berg, 2006)